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The Ontario Curriculum – Exemplars
Grades 1–8

Writing

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Samples of Student Work:
A Resource for Teachers

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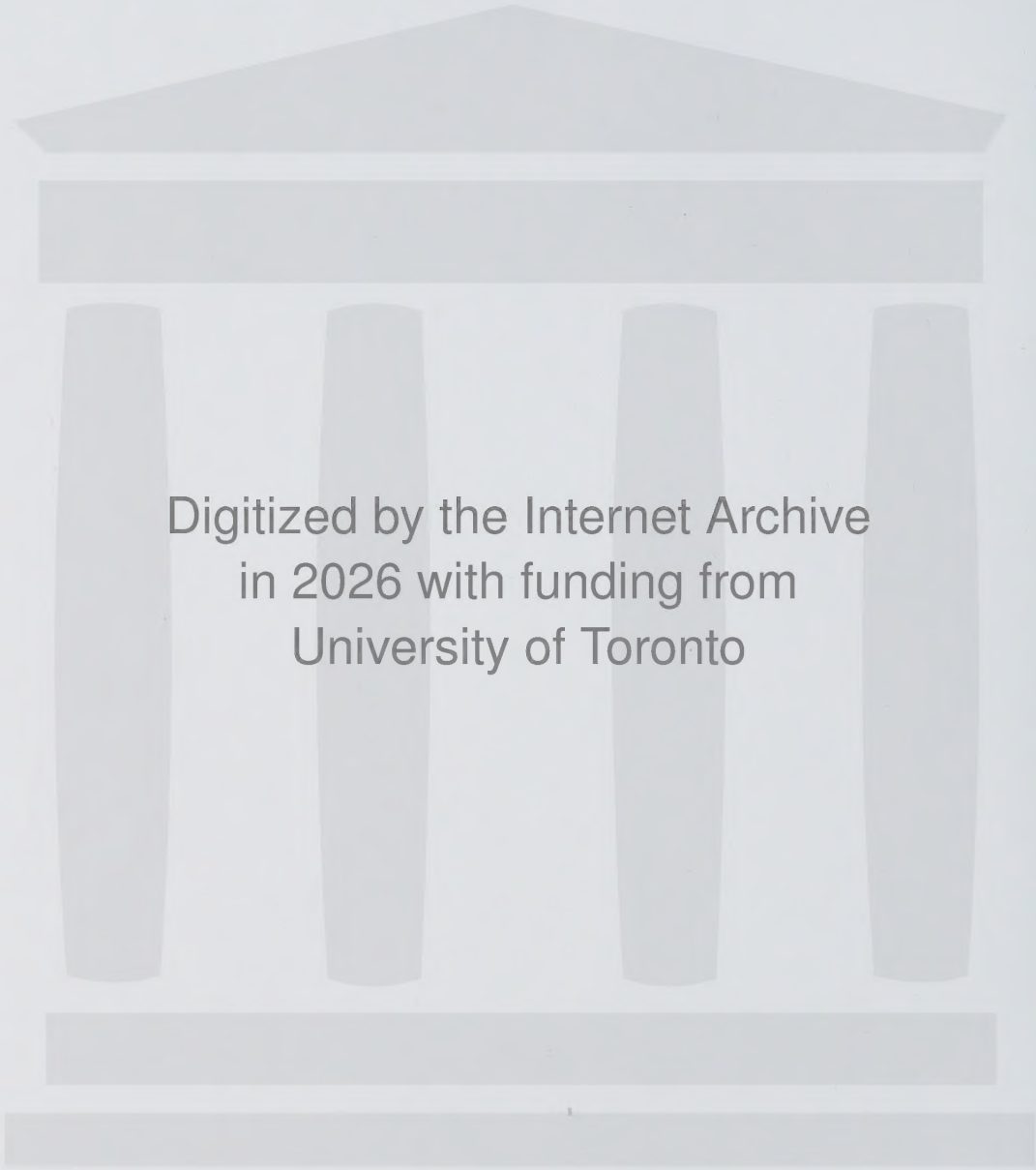
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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Le curriculum de l'Ontario – Copies types de la 1re à la 8e année : Écriture, 1999.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education and Training's World Wide Web site at http://www.edu.gov.on.ca.

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Introduction

In 1997, the Ministry of Education and Training published new curriculum for Ontario elementary students. The new curriculum is more specific than the previous curriculum regarding both the knowledge and the skills that students are expected to acquire in each grade. In the language document, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*, teachers are provided with the curriculum expectations for language – reading, writing, and oral and visual communication – and brief descriptions of four levels of student achievement on which to base their assessments of students' work (see page 9).

This resource booklet, *The Ontario Curriculum – Exemplars, Grades 1–8: Writing, 1999*, focuses on writing only and provides teachers, parents,[1] and students with a selection of representative *end-of-year* samples of student writing[2] based on the curriculum expectations.

In this provincial curriculum exemplars writing project, teachers and administrators designed writing tasks and rubrics (scoring scales), field-tested them in classrooms, suggested changes, administered the final tasks, marked the student writing holistically, and selected for inclusion in this booklet the samples that they felt represented the four levels of writing achievement. The choice of samples reflects the professional judgement of teachers in the project, and the samples are not intended to be used as standards for the province. The process used for this project will serve as a model for boards, schools, and teachers in setting writing tasks in the context of regular classroom work, developing rubrics, assessing the writing of their own students, and planning for the improvement of student work.

The samples selected for this resource illustrate each of the four levels of student achievement in writing for students *at the end of each grade* and were completed by Ontario students in the last month of each grade. The samples provided have been reproduced "as is", with no attempt to edit the students' work. The writing is anonymous, with no students, teachers, or schools identified.

Purpose

This booklet has been developed to:

- show the characteristics of student work at each level of achievement for each grade;
- promote greater consistency in the assessment of student work from grade to grade and across the province;

1. The word *parents* is used throughout this document to stand for parent(s) and guardian(s).

2. The ministry was given permission to publish the writing samples in this document.

- provide an approach to improving student learning by demonstrating the use of clear criteria applied to student writing in response to clearly defined tasks and by including examples of possible feedback to students in the form of Teachers' Notes;
- show the connections between what students are expected to learn (the expectations) and how their work can be assessed on the basis of levels of achievement;
- promote the writing process outlined on page 11 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997.*

Teachers, parents, and students are encouraged to examine these student samples, to think about the characteristics and descriptions of work at each level of achievement in the individual grades, and to develop an understanding of how one level of achievement differs from another. Teachers might also wish to discuss the strategies they could use to enhance student learning and promote student achievement in writing.

Background

Ontario school boards were invited to provide student writing samples for the curriculum writing exemplars project. Students provided the writing samples, while teachers and administrators participated in the following components of the project:

- the field-testing of the writing tasks and the rubrics
- the collection of the samples of student work at the end of the school year
- the selection of the samples
- the review of the draft manuscript for this booklet

The participation of Ontario teachers from all regions has been invaluable in developing the material used in this booklet. Teachers, some of them working with the curriculum expectations and the achievement levels for the first time, contributed by:

- offering their time and classrooms for field-testing the materials;
- suggesting revisions to the writing tasks;
- developing and revising the rubrics used to assess the writing tasks;
- submitting end-of-grade samples of student writing;
- participating in staff-development sessions to build expertise in student assessment;
- selecting the samples used to illustrate the four levels of achievement of student writing at each grade level.

In some jurisdictions, school councils were also involved in the project, with members participating in the staff-development sessions, the selection of the local samples, and the review of the draft document.

Features

This booklet contains:

- an overview of the student tasks and the teaching and learning strategies used to produce the writing samples;
- task-specific assessment rubrics based on the categories and descriptions from the achievement-levels chart on page 9 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997;*

- samples of student writing for each grade level that reflect the four levels of achievement;
- teachers' comments that explain why a particular achievement level was assigned to each piece of student writing;
- a glossary of assessment terms.

How the Rubrics Were Developed and Applied

In this booklet, the term *rubric* means a scale, in this case one that describes levels of achievement for a particular complex task and guides the scoring of that task according to relevant criteria. To assess student achievement, the teacher chooses from different descriptions of work that are specific to each level of achievement. In this project, a rubric was used for each writing task to provide an effective means of assessing the particular type of student performance, to allow for consistent scoring of student performance, and to provide information to students on how to improve their work. Although rubrics were used effectively in this project, they are only one way to assess student achievement. Other forms of classroom assessment include anecdotal records, checklists, tests, and teacher observation. Teachers select and use many assessment tools to assess and evaluate student achievement.

For this project, a rubric was developed for each of the writing tasks, on the basis of the achievement-levels chart on page 9 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*. The achievement levels for writing focus on four categories of knowledge and skills: reasoning, communication, organization, and conventions. The brief descriptions in the achievement-levels chart apply in a general way to all language assessment. Each rubric contains the following components:

- the categories and the achievement levels (i.e., the framework) from page 9
- the relevant criteria (descriptions of student learning) from page 9
- the expectations for the grade level (level 3 on the achievement-levels chart is the provincial standard)
- the required components specific to each writing task (e.g., the parts of a letter)

The rubrics for the writing tasks are similar to the writing scales used by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) for the Grade 3 and Grade 6 provincial assessments in that both the rubrics and the EQAO scales are based on the curriculum expectations and the achievement levels for language in Ontario. The rubrics differ from the EQAO scales in that they were developed to be used in the context of classroom instruction and assessment and to be applied to the one particular form of writing identified in each grade assignment. Each student participating in the exemplars project prepared one writing sample in response to a single task.

How the Samples Were Selected

After the elaborated descriptions in the rubrics had been reviewed and revised by all the teachers participating in the writing exemplars project, they then were used to assess the student writing samples at both the district school board level and the provincial level. The teachers used a process that is sometimes called "consensus marking" or "teacher moderation":

- The teachers first reviewed all of their students' work samples and assigned a holistic score (from level 1 to level 4) to each sample.
- The teachers then reviewed the samples a second time, looking at all four categories in the rubric to provide an analytic score (e.g., level 1 in "Reasoning", level 2 in "Communication").
- Following these steps, the teachers assigned each sample an overall level based on both the holistic score and the analytic score, with reference to specific criteria requirements that had been met in the student sample.
- At the district school board level, groups of three or four other teachers for each grade level then reviewed the student work until they were able to reach consensus on the assigned level. This was done to ensure that the work being selected clearly illustrated that level of performance.
- All the writing samples were submitted to a provincial selection team of teachers, which chose the samples for each level of each grade. The comments of the selection team are included in this publication so that teachers, parents, and students will be able to see how a rubric for a particular writing task has been applied to the samples of student writing.

The following should be noted:

- Two samples of student writing have been provided at each of the four achievement levels. The use of two samples is intended to show that the characteristics of a level can be exemplified in different ways.
- The majority of student writing samples in this booklet were selected to show a level of achievement that was consistent in the four categories (reasoning, communication, organization, and conventions). In classrooms, student achievement may vary across categories.
- The students' *effort* was not assessed, since this is evaluated separately by teachers as part of the "learning skills" component in the Provincial Report Card, Grades 1–8.
- Student samples that were assessed using the rubrics and judged to be below grade level were not included in this booklet.
- Each of the sample tasks reflects only one possible form of student writing (e.g., a letter). Students will practise many other kinds of writing during the school year.

Using the Writing Samples

Teachers and Administrators

The samples of student writing included in this booklet will help teachers and administrators by:

- enabling them to help students improve their achievement in writing by using the student writing samples and the criteria for assessment;
- providing a basis for conversations among colleagues, parents, and students about the assessment and evaluation of student achievement in writing;
- facilitating communication with parents regarding the learning expectations and levels of achievement at each grade level;
- promoting fair, consistent, and objective assessment of student writing within and across grade levels.

Teachers may choose to:

- use the teaching/learning activities outlined in the writing tasks;
- adapt the writing tasks and rubrics to design comparable writing tasks;
- compare copies of their students' work with the samples in this booklet;
- develop rubrics with colleagues and students;
- share student work with colleagues for consensus marking;
- partner with other schools to design tasks and rubrics, and to select samples for other writing tasks and other subject areas.

Administrators may choose to:

- encourage and facilitate teacher collaboration regarding standards and assessment;
- facilitate sessions for parents and school councils on this booklet;
- participate in future exemplars projects within their district school boards or on behalf of the Ministry of Education and Training.

Parents

The writing tasks in this booklet exemplify a range of meaningful and relevant learning activities that are representative of tasks related to the curriculum in Grades 1–8. In addition, this booklet invites the involvement and support of parents in the writing process, as they work with their children to improve the children's achievement in writing. Parents may use the student writing samples and rubrics as:

- models to help monitor their children's progress from level to level and from grade to grade;
- a basis for communication with teachers about their children's achievement;
- a source of information to help their children improve their achievement;
- models to illustrate the application of the levels of achievement;
- a resource to help them understand their children's report cards.

Students

Students write every day, and written communication is a part of learning in all curriculum areas. Student performance improves when students are given clear expectations for learning, clear criteria for assessment, and immediate and helpful feedback. The rubrics in this booklet will provide specific criteria that indicate achievement from level to level and from grade to grade. Students' performance improves as students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own achievement and to reflect on their own progress and "next steps".

It is anticipated that this booklet will help students in the following ways:

- Students can use the samples and rubrics as models.
- The writing tasks and the samples will help clarify the curriculum expectations for learning.
- The rubrics and the comments of the teacher selection teams will help clarify the assessment criteria.
- Students' awareness of the tasks and rubrics will help them to communicate more effectively about their achievement with their teachers and parents, and to ask relevant questions about their own progress.
- Students can use the criteria and the student samples of the highest achievement levels to design "next steps" to improve their writing.
- The instructions for the writing tasks will help students apply the writing process to their own writing.

The Writing Tasks

At each grade level, students engaged in the writing samples project were given a specific writing task to be completed in class, using the writing process described on page 11 of the *Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*. The chart on pages 7–8 of this booklet summarizes the task at each grade level, makes reference to the curriculum expectations for the grade, and paraphrases the level 3 descriptions from the rubric used to assess the student writing for the grade.

The Writing Process

This booklet has been designed to promote consistency in both the assessment of student writing and the implementation of the various stages of the writing process. The samples are students' final copies and reflect the last stage of the writing process, rather than first attempts (see pages 6 and 11 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*). The writing process includes these phases: generating ideas, planning the writing, producing a draft, revising and editing the draft, and producing a final copy. Each phase may be repeated one or more times as students strive to communicate their ideas and information.

When engaged in the writing tasks, students had access to resources that would typically be available in Ontario classrooms, including computers, dictionaries, thesauruses, visual organizers, and peer editors. As in any classroom, students completed the writing tasks at different rates of speed and showed a range of proficiency and originality.

Although students approached the writing tasks with varying degrees of independence, they produced the writing samples in this booklet *without adult assistance in the writing, revising, or editing of the final product.* (In Grades 1 and 2, the curriculum expectations indicate that students revise and edit their writing with the assistance of the teacher. In this project, therefore, Grade 1 and 2 teachers used a whole-class editing process.)

Task Summaries

Writing Task	Curriculum Expectations	Level 3 Descriptions
Grade 1 Write about a favourite toy, using a planning sheet to record ideas.	• to produce a short piece of writing • to organize ideas to convey a clear message	***Reasoning:*** The writing is on topic. ***Communication:*** The description in the story is clear. ***Organization:*** Common ideas are grouped together. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 2 Write a story, using a story planner to sequence events.	• to produce a short narrative • to organize ideas in a logical sequence	***Reasoning:*** The story makes sense and the ideas are connected to the story line. ***Communication:*** There is clear evidence of the writer's voice recounting the adventure. ***Organization:*** The story has a beginning, a middle, and an end. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 3 Write a friendly letter intended for a specific audience, using a visual organizer.	• to communicate ideas for a specific purpose and to a specific audience • to organize information to show a main idea and related details	***Reasoning:*** The ideas connect to the main topic and are supported by sufficient detail. ***Communication:*** The purpose and the audience for the letter are clear. ***Organization:*** The format of a letter is used. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 4 Write a humourous story three paragraphs in length, using a story map and a thesaurus.	• to organize and develop ideas using paragraphs to tell a story • to choose the words that are most effective for the writing purpose • to revise and edit the writing	***Reasoning:*** The ideas are developed and are connected to the story line. ***Communication:*** The story engages the reader. ***Organization:*** The story has a beginning, a middle, and a logical end. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.

Writing Task	Curriculum Expectations	Level 3 Descriptions
Grade 5 Write a non-fiction report, expanding information from jot notes on a planning web and a report planner.	• to organize information to convey a central idea, using well-developed paragraphs • to use writing to summarize information	***Reasoning:*** The report uses developed ideas and information from personal knowledge and other sources. ***Communication:*** Accurate details help the reader understand the topic. ***Organization:*** Development is logical, with paragraphs linked to the main topic and a closing that links with the opening. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 6 Write a summary of information based on an article, using a visual organizer and jot notes.	• to produce a summary from a preselected piece of writing • to organize the information to convey a central idea, using well-linked paragraphs	***Reasoning:*** The summary captures the key messages of the text. ***Communication:*** The information is summarized in the writer's own words. ***Organization:*** The introduction, body, and closing are clear and logically developed. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 7 Write a descriptive article that is intended to persuade an audience.	• to produce a piece of writing using description • to revise and edit work, focusing on content and elements of style • to communicate ideas to a specific audience for a purpose	***Reasoning:*** The ideas and details are connected to the topic. ***Communication:*** The writing persuades and involves the reader. ***Organization:*** A logical order supports a central idea. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.
Grade 8 Write a letter expressing an opinion or a point of view.	• to use writing to clarify and explore issues • to organize information and ideas creatively as well as logically	***Reasoning:*** The writer's opinion or point of view is supported by relevant facts. ***Communication:*** The writer's opinion or point of view is clear and persuasive. ***Organization:*** The issue is defined and developed, and the conclusion summarizes the issue. ***Conventions:*** Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and visual presentation are accurate and appropriate.

Grade 1

A Short Piece of Descriptive Writing ("My Favourite Toy")

A Short Piece of Descriptive Writing ("My Favourite Toy")

The Task

Students were asked to write a short piece of writing entitled "My Favourite Toy" using a planning sheet to record their ideas. They were reminded to make sure that their stories made sense and contained some details and information. They were also reminded to check their spelling and punctuation before writing their final copies. (In some individual cases, when teachers felt that students' published copies would be no better than their drafts, they were not asked to complete published copies.)

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- communicate ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes;
- organize information so that the writing conveys a clear message;
- produce short pieces of writing using simple forms;
- begin to revise their written work with the assistance of their teachers;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 1 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- write simple but complete sentences;
- use a period at the end of a statement;
- correctly spell words identified by their teachers;
- use phonics to spell unfamiliar words;
- use capital letters to begin sentences and to differentiate certain words (e.g., names, the pronoun I);
- print legibly (capitals and small letters);
- leave spaces between words.

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- writing sentences
- revising and editing following whole-class prompts
- using visual organizers (planners)
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers selected and read aloud one or more stories about a child and his or her toy. Using the ideas from the story or stories read, they demonstrated how to complete a planner such as a web diagram or the following chart:

	What	Where	When	Why	How
picture					
key words					

Teachers then used the following process:

Prewriting. Each student brought a favourite toy to school and completed a planner about it. This was followed by class discussion, after which students were given the opportunity to add to their planners.

Drafting. Using the planner, each student drew a picture, filled in the boxes with key words, and drafted a short piece of writing about his or her favourite toy.

Revising. In small groups or in the class as a whole, students read their drafts for meaning and then added, deleted, or changed words to improve their writing.

Editing. In small groups or in the class as a whole, students checked to ensure that they had capitals at the beginning of sentences and for names, that they had periods at the end of sentences, and that their words were spelled correctly. Note that in Grade 1 editing is done with the teacher's assistance.

Publishing. Teachers decided whether students should rewrite their drafts into good copies or whether the draft copies already represented students' best efforts. Where a student's work was difficult to read, the teacher made a clear copy which was attached to the student's original.

Reflecting. Students reflected on the process they had followed by participating in a sharing circle or through some other form of reflection used in the classroom.

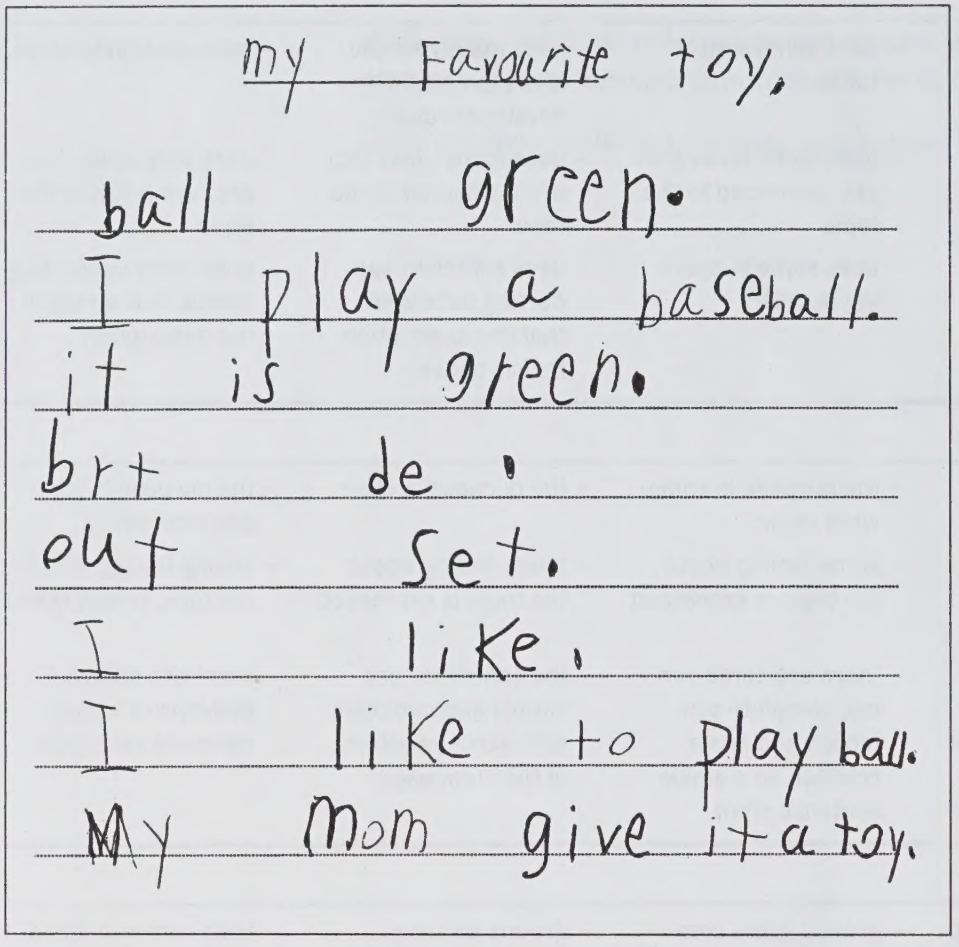
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 1: Rubric for a Short Piece of Descriptive Writing

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas and connection to the topic	– uses very few, simple ideas	– uses some simple ideas	– uses mainly simple ideas but also some developed ideas	– uses developed ideas
	– uses ideas that are not on topic	– uses some ideas that are connected to the topic	– uses many ideas that are connected to the topic	– uses only ideas that are connected to the topic
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details	– uses very few supporting details	– uses some supporting details	– uses sufficient supporting details so that the description makes sense	– uses many supporting details that enhance the description
Communication	**In the student's work:**			
– purpose: to describe a favourite toy	– the purpose is unclear	– the purpose is somewhat clear	– the purpose is clear	– the purpose is clear and interesting
– voice (feelings, opinions, attitudes)	– little feeling about the topic is expressed	– some feeling about the topic is expressed	– much feeling about the topic is expressed	– strong feeling about the topic is expressed
– sentence structure	– there are a few simple, sometimes incomplete sentences and a reliance on a single sentence stem	– there are some simple, complete sentences and some reliance on a single sentence stem	– the sentences are simple and complete with some variation in the stem used	– there are different patterns of simple, complete sentences
Organization	**The student's writing:**			
– structure (grouping of ideas)	– shows little grouping of common ideas (resembles a random list)	– groups some common ideas (includes elements of both a list and a story)	– groups common ideas together to tell a story	– links common ideas (the writing flows naturally)
Conventions	**The student:**			
– grammar	– uses a few of the conventions studied	– uses some of the conventions studied	– uses most of the conventions studied	– uses all or almost all of the conventions studied
– spelling	– shows some evidence of spelling strategies	– uses both phonetic and conventional spelling for familiar words	– uses conventional spelling for familiar words and phonetic spelling for unfamiliar words	– uses conventional spelling for most words
– punctuation	– uses capitals and periods randomly or not at all	– makes some errors in using capitals and periods	– generally uses capitals and periods accurately	– almost always uses capitals and periods accurately
– visual presentation	– produces a visual presentation that is unclear (spacing, placement, legibility)	– produces a visual presentation that is basically clear	– produces a clear visual presentation	– produces a clear visual presentation that enhances the story

Grade 1 Level 1: Example 1

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"



my Favourite toy.

ball green.
I play a baseball.
it is green.
brt de .
out set.
I like.
I like to play ball.
My mom give it a toy.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only a very few simple ideas
- provides very few supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is unclear because of incomplete sentences

Organization
- the writing resembles a list

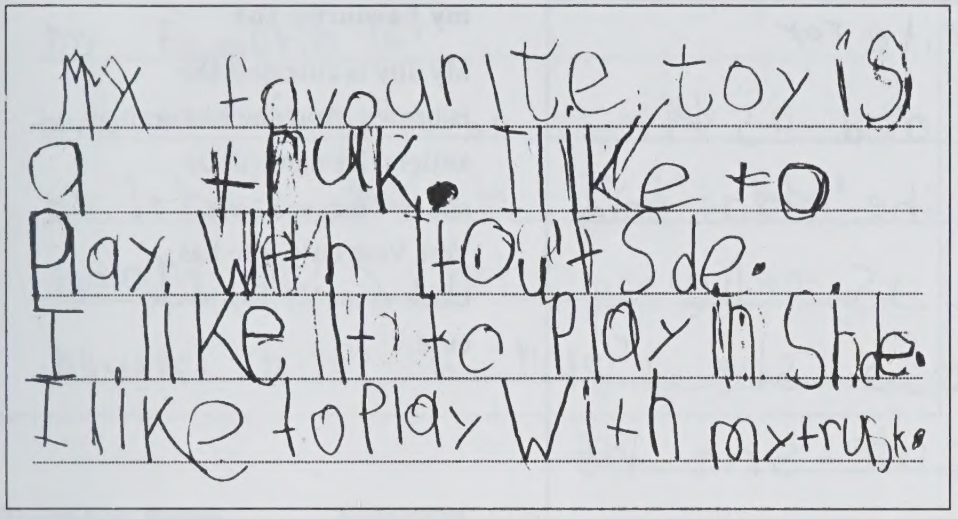
Conventions
- makes improper use of capitals and periods
- gives some evidence of the use of spelling strategies

Comments

The thoughts are not complete (missing words). The ideas are repetitive and disorganized.

Grade 1 Level 1: Example 2

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"



Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only one simple idea (where the child plays with the toy)
- provides no supporting details

Communication
- includes little description
- uses a few simple sentences that rely mainly on a single sentence stem ("I like to ...")

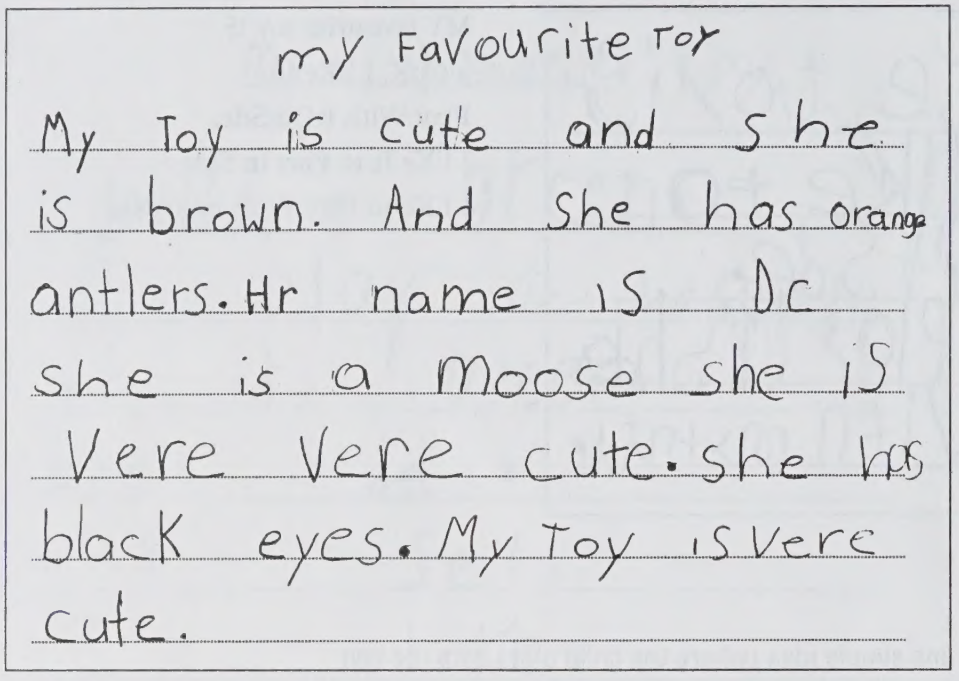
Organization
- the writing resembles a list

Conventions
- uses capitals randomly
- has some spacing problems
- includes both phonetic and conventional spelling

Comments
Although the student uses complete sentences and some phonetic and conventional spelling, only one idea is presented.

Grade 1 Level 2: Example 1

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"


my Favourite Toy
My Toy is cute and she is brown. And she has orange antlers. Hr name is Dc she is a Moose she is Vere Vere cute. she has black eyes. My Toy isvere cute.

my Favourite ToY

My Toy is cute and she is brown. And she has orange antlers. Hr name is Dc she is a moose she is Vere Vere cute. she has black eyes. My Toy isvere cute.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only simple ideas connected to the topic
- provides some supporting details

Communication
- communicates some idea of the writer's feelings
- uses simple sentences with repetition of details and structure

Organization
- the grouping of ideas is somewhat inconsistent

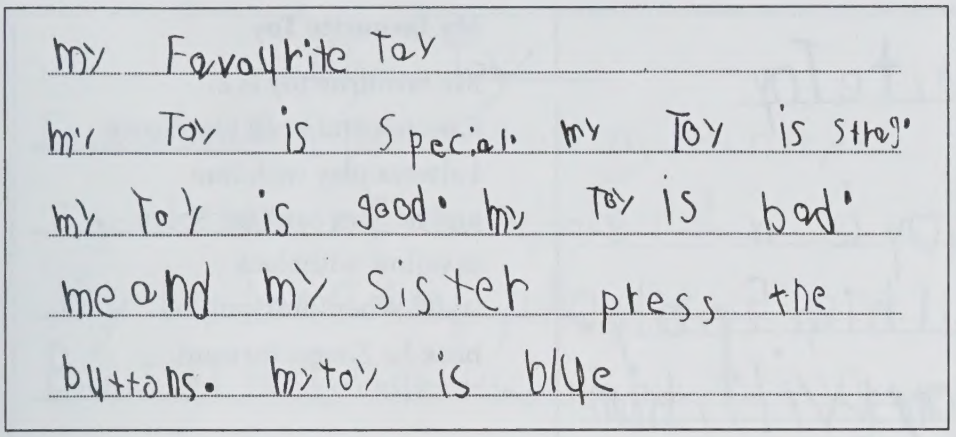
Conventions
- makes some errors in the use of capitals and periods
- uses both phonetic and conventional spelling

Comments

This piece contains some repetition ("vere vere cute" and "isvere cute").

Grade 1 Level 2: Example 2

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"


my Favoyrite Toy
my Toy is Special. my Toy is strag.
my Toy is good. my Toy is bad.
me and my sister press the
buttons. my toy is blue

mY Favourite Tay

my Toy is Special. my Toy is Strag.
my Toy is good. my Toy is bad.
me and my sister press the
buttons. my toy is blue

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only simple ideas connected to the topic
- provides some supporting details

Communication
- uses simple sentences with most using the same sentence stem ("My toy is ...")
- the description is usually clear
- some contradictory feelings are evident

Organization
- there is some evidence of grouping in the list ("good" and "bad")

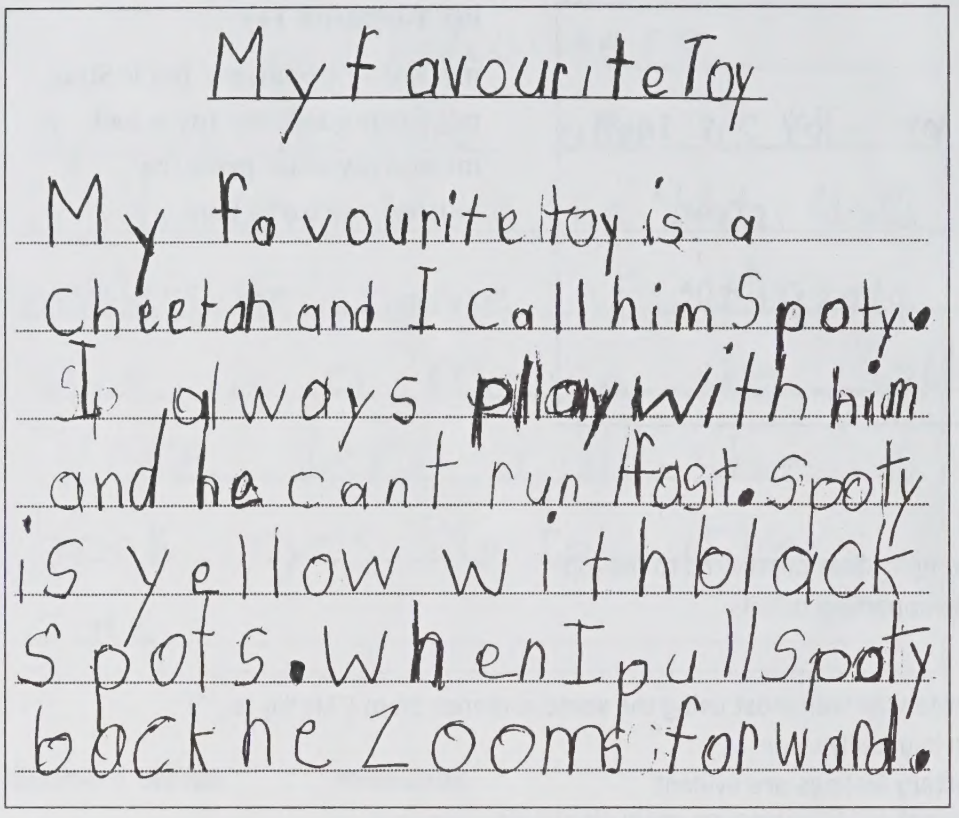
Conventions
- makes some errors in the use of capitals and periods
- uses both phonetic and conventional spelling

Comments

The description uses simple ideas. There is some confusion whether the toy is good or bad. Some errors in using capitals and periods.

Grade 1 Level 3: Example 1

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"



My favourite Toy

My favourite toy is a
Cheetah and I call him Spoty.
I always play with him
and he cant run fast. Spoty
is yellow withblack
spots.WhenIpullSpoty
back he Zooms forward.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- expresses a complex idea ("When I pull ... he zooms.")
- connects many ideas to the topic
- provides supporting details and a description that makes sense

Communication
- includes several ideas (what the toy is, does, looks like, and what special feature it has) that give a clear description
- uses a variety of sentence types

Organization
- groups ideas to tell a story

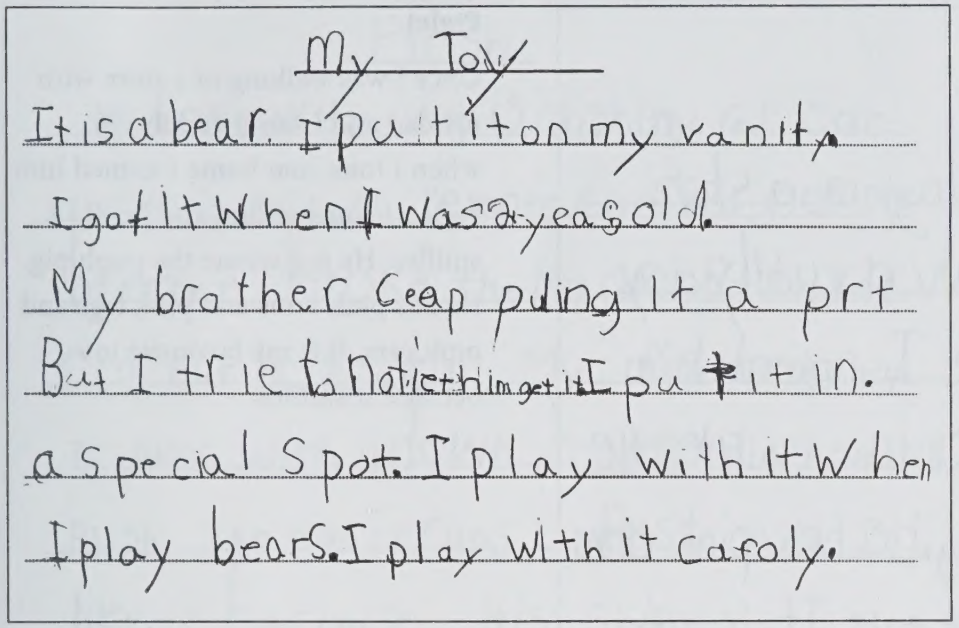
Conventions
- makes accurate use of capitals and periods
- uses phonetic spelling of unfamiliar words ("Spoty" for "Spotty", "cant" for "can't")
- work is legible

Comments

The student has achieved the purpose in this "to the point" piece of writing. The sentence structure links the ideas to each other.

Grade 1 Level 3: Example 2

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"


My Toy
It is a bear. I put it on my vanity.
I got it When I was 2yeasold.
My brother ceap puling it a prt
But I trie to notlet him get it. I put it in.
a special Spot. I play with it When
I play bearS. I play with it cafoly.

My Toy

It is a bear. I pu t iton my vanity.
I got it When I was 2yeasold.
My brother ceap puling it a prt
But I trie to notlet him get it. I pu t it in.
a Special Spot. I play with it When
I play bearS. I play with it cafoly.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- develops some ideas using the conjunctions "but" and "when"
- includes many ideas that are connected to the topic
- provides supporting details and a description that makes sense

Communication
- describes the toy clearly, indicating its importance by words such as "put it in a special spot" and "carefully"
- uses both simple and complete sentences

Organization
- groups common ideas to tell a story
- includes complex sentences that use the conjunctions "but" and "when"

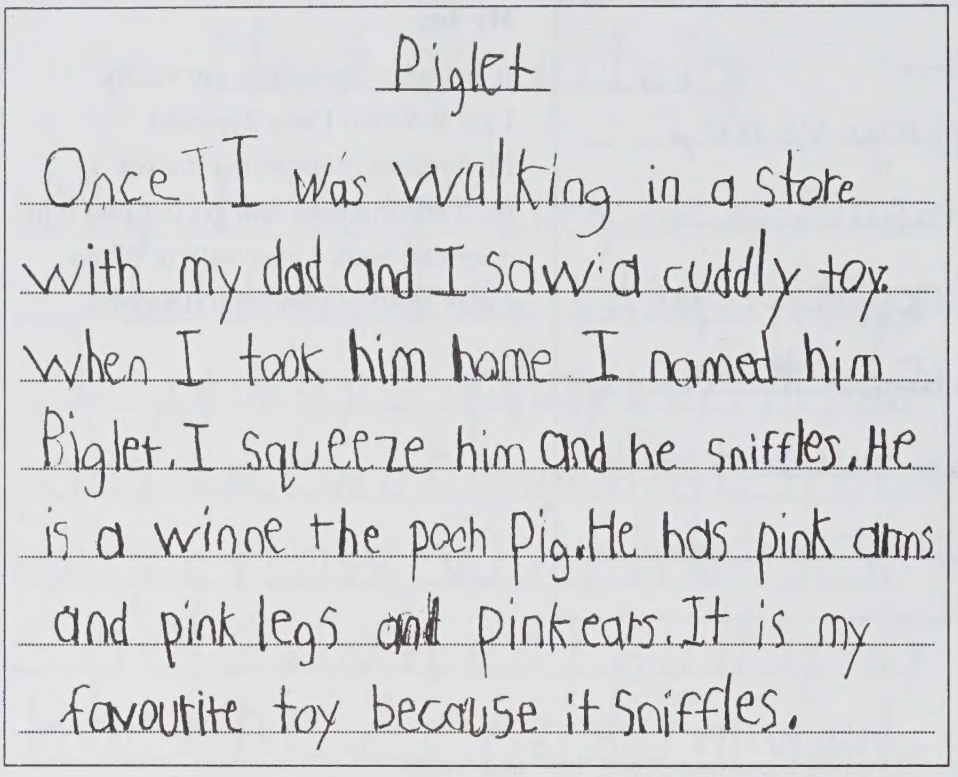
Conventions
- generally uses capitals and periods accurately
- uses phonetic spelling for unfamiliar words ("ceap" for "keep" or "kept","cafoly" for "carefully", "puling" for "pulling", "trie" for "try")

Comments

This piece contains mostly simple ideas but includes a fair amount of supporting detail.

Grade 1 Level 4: Example 1

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"


Piglet
Once I I was walking in a store with my dad and I saw a cuddly toy. when I took him home I named him Piglet. I squeeze him and he sniffles. He is a winne the pooh Pig. He has pink arms and pink legs and pink ears. It is my favourite toy because it sniffles.

Piglet

Once I was walking in a store with my dad and I saw a cuddly toy. when I took him home I named him Piglet. I squeeze him and he sniffles. He is a winne the pooh pig. He has pink arms and pink legs and pink ears. It is my favourite toy because it sniffles.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- develops ideas using two related thoughts in several sentences
- links the ideas consistently to the topic
- enhances the description by providing many supporting details

Communication
- clearly communicates feelings
- uses a good choice of words (i.e., "cuddly", colour words, "sniffles"), which makes the description clear and interesting
- uses different patterns of simple, complete sentences

Organization
- the writing flows naturally from the purchase of the toy to the explanation of why it became the favourite

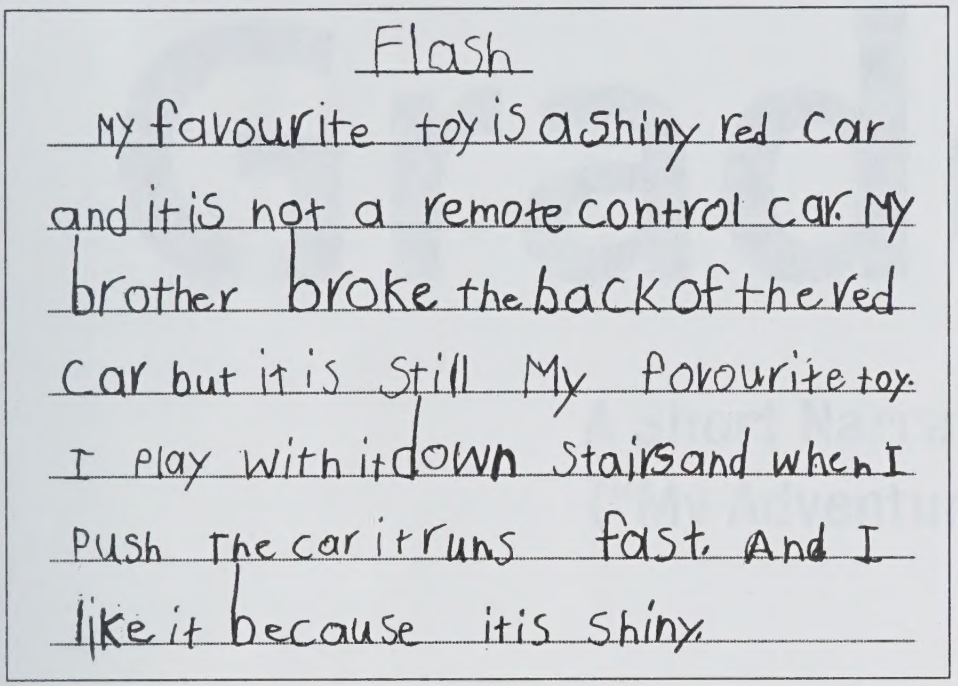
Conventions
- makes no spelling errors with familiar words
- uses capitals for proper nouns
- has periods at the end of all sentences
- has neat presentation

Comments

The writing uses ideas and supporting details that all relate to the topic. The writing is organized to flow naturally. The writing uses simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Grade 1 Level 4: Example 2

"MY FAVOURITE TOY"



Flash

My favourite toy is a shiny red car and it is not a remote control car. My brother broke the back of the red car but it is Still My favourite toy. I Play with itdown stairsand when I Push The car it runs fast. And I like it because itis shiny.

Flash

My favourite toy is a shiny red car and it is not a remote control car. My brother broke the back of the red car but it is Still My favourite toy. I Play with itdown stairsand when I Push The car it runs fast. And I like it because itis shiny.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- uses two related thoughts in several sentences to develop ideas
- consistently links ideas to topic
- the description is enhanced by many supporting details

Communication
- the description is clear and interesting
- the writer clearly communicates his feelings (i.e., still his favourite toy even after his brother broke it)
- uses different patterns of simple, complete sentences

Organization
- the writing flows naturally

Conventions
- includes accurate spelling
- uses capitals and periods
- writing is legible and neat

Comments

The student uses two or more related ideas in the same sentence (more than once). The style used is very expressive.

Grade 2

A Short Narrative
("My Adventure")

A Short Narrative ("My Adventure")

The Task

Students were asked to write a story entitled "My Adventure", making sure that their story had a beginning, middle, and ending and that it made sense. Students were asked to check their work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation and to correct their errors in their final copies. (In some individual cases, when teachers felt that students' published copies would be no better than their drafts, they were not asked to complete published copies.)

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- communicate ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes;
- organize ideas in a logical sequence;
- begin to write more elaborate sentences by using adjectives and adverbs;
- produce short pieces of writing using simple forms;
- revise and edit their written work, focusing on specific features;
- proofread and correct their final drafts;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 2 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 2, students will:

- use connecting words to link simple sentences;
- use a variety of sentence types;
- begin to use resources (e.g., dictionaries, word lists, computers) to check the spelling of unfamiliar words;
- use a comma correctly to separate items in a list, in dates, and in addresses;
- use adjectives appropriately for description;
- use capital letters for proper nouns;
- print legibly;
- use margins and spacing appropriately.

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- process writing
- using visual organizers (planners)
- from literature sources such as stories shared in class, developing class or personal lists of descriptive words and words that denote, for example, sequence in time (e.g., first, then, next, later, finally)
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

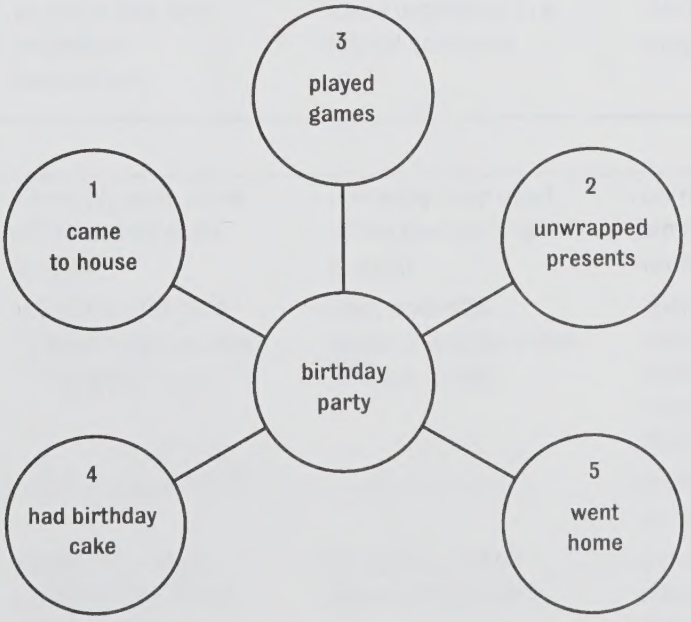
The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting, Part 1. With the class, each teacher recalled a class adventure (e.g., a field trip, a class walk, a special-event day), showed a video, or read a story that illustrated the passage of time. The teacher then demonstrated how to use a planner such as one of the following to recount the sequence of events.

- *Planner #1.* Students use separate cards, each containing a picture and a few words, for each stage of an event. They share their ideas and then sequence the cards. For example, for a birthday party:

- *Planner #2.* Students place each stage of an event on a web, using one bubble for each stage. They then number the bubbles in the appropriate sequence. For example:



The sample planners were posted for reference.

Prewriting, Part 2. Students used the think-pair-share strategy to recall adventures they had had (e.g., trips, play days at school, sports events, birthday parties, going to a new school, sleepovers, hikes, visits to relatives). They shared these experiences, and teachers recorded them on webs, which were later posted for reference.

Drafting. Each student drafted a short piece of writing based on his or her adventure, using the planner as a guide.

Revising. In small groups or in the class as a whole, students read their drafts first for sense, then to ensure that they had used the correct sequence (e.g., Will the reader know what happened first? Were words included to help the reader know the sequence?), and finally to determine whether they should add, delete, or change any descriptive words (e.g., Do the words help the reader form a mental picture?).

Editing. In small groups or in the class as a whole, students checked to ensure that they had used capitals appropriately at the beginning of sentences, for names, and for their titles; that they had periods or question or exclamation marks at the ends of their sentences; that they had used commas to separate series of words; and that their words were spelled correctly.

Publishing. Teachers decided whether students should rewrite their drafts into good copies or whether the draft copies already represented students' best efforts.

Reflecting. Students reflected on the process they had used by completing a reflection sheet provided in the student package or by participating in an activity such as a sharing circle in which each student has to complete a sentence stem orally (e.g., "The thing I liked best about my writing was ..." or "My favourite sentence in my story was ..." or "It was important to me because ...").

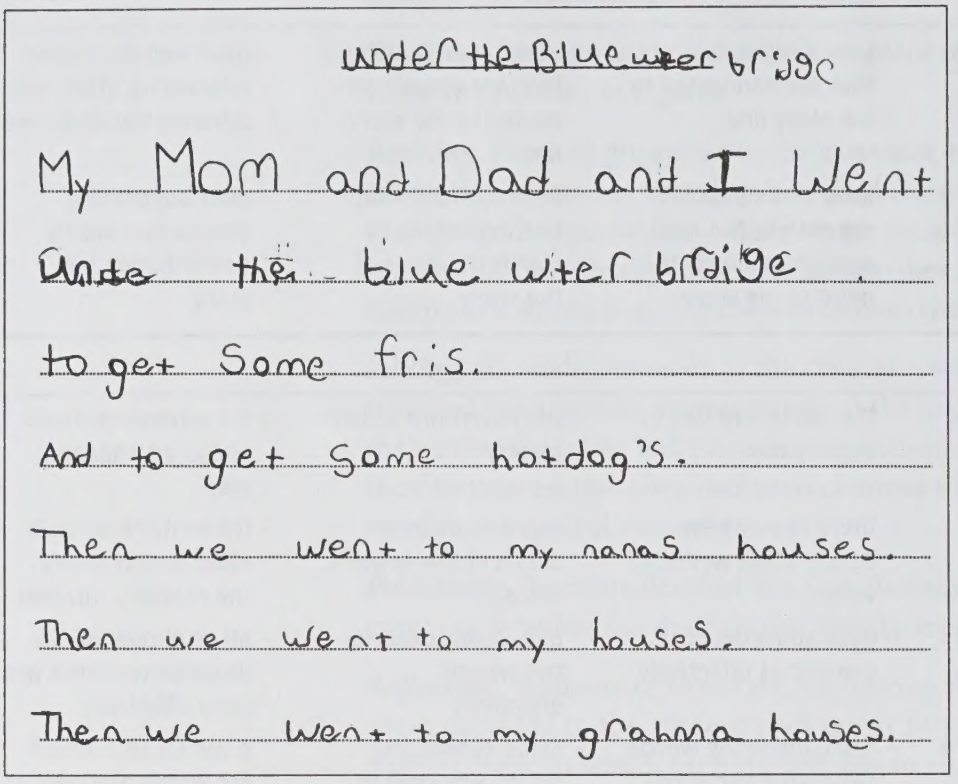
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 2: Rubric for a Short Narrative

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas and connection to the story line	– uses very few simple ideas that are not connected to the story line	– uses simple ideas that are connected to the story line	– uses developed ideas that are usually connected to the story line	– uses well-developed, interesting ideas that advance the story line
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details	– uses very few supporting details	– uses some supporting details, but not enough to clarify the point of the story	– uses sufficient supporting details to clarify the point of the story	– uses supporting details that clarify and enhance the story
Communication	**In the student's work:**			
– purpose: to relate a true adventure (narrative)	– the adventure is not clear	– the adventure can be discerned	– the adventure unfolds clearly	– the adventure develops in an engaging way
– voice (feelings, opinions, and attitudes)	– the writer's voice is not evident	– there is some evidence of the writer's voice	– there is clear evidence of the writer's voice	– the writer's voice is clear and sustains the reader's interest
– word use and vocabulary	– uses few descriptive words effectively	– uses some descriptive words effectively	– uses many descriptive words effectively	– all or almost all the descriptive words are used effectively
– sentence structure	– connecting words are not used	– few connecting words (with little variation) are used to link simple sentences	– some connecting words are used to link simple sentences	– a variety of connecting words are used to link sentences effectively
Organization	**The student's writing:**			
– overall structure (beginning, middle, end, links)	– shows little evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end	– shows some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end	– has a beginning, a middle, and an end	– has a clear beginning, middle, and end
	– includes few events or ideas that are organized sequentially	– includes some events or ideas that are organized sequentially	– includes events or ideas organized in a logical sequence	– includes events or ideas organized logically and effectively
Conventions	**The student:**			
– grammar	– correctly uses very few of the conventions studied	– correctly uses some of the conventions studied	– correctly uses most of the conventions studied	– correctly uses all or almost all of the conventions studied
– spelling	– shows some evidence of spelling strategies	– uses phonetic and conventional spelling for familiar words	– uses phonetic spelling only for more difficult words	– spells most words accurately, but may make occasional errors with more difficult words
– punctuation	– makes many errors	– makes some errors	– makes few errors	– makes almost no errors
– visual presentation	– produces a visual presentation that is unclear (e.g., spacing, legibility)	– produces a visual presentation that is basically clear	– produces a clear visual presentation	– produces a clear visual presentation that enhances the narrative

Grade 2 Level 1: Example 1

"MY ADVENTURE"


under the Bluewter bridge

My Mom and Dad and I Went

unde the blue wter brdige .

to get Some fris.

And to get Some hotdog'S.

Then we went to my nanaS houses.

Then we went to my houseS.

Then we went to my grahma houSeS.

under the Bluewter bridge

My Mom and Dad and I Went
unde the blue wter brdige
to get Some fris.
And to get Some hot dog'S.
Then we went to my nanaS houses.
Then we went to my houseS.
Then we went to my grahma houSeS.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only a few simple, unrelated ideas
- provides no supporting details

Communication
- uses no descriptive words
- a sense of adventure is not apparent
- there is no evidence of the writer's feelings

Organization
- there is little evidence of a middle or end
- includes only a few events

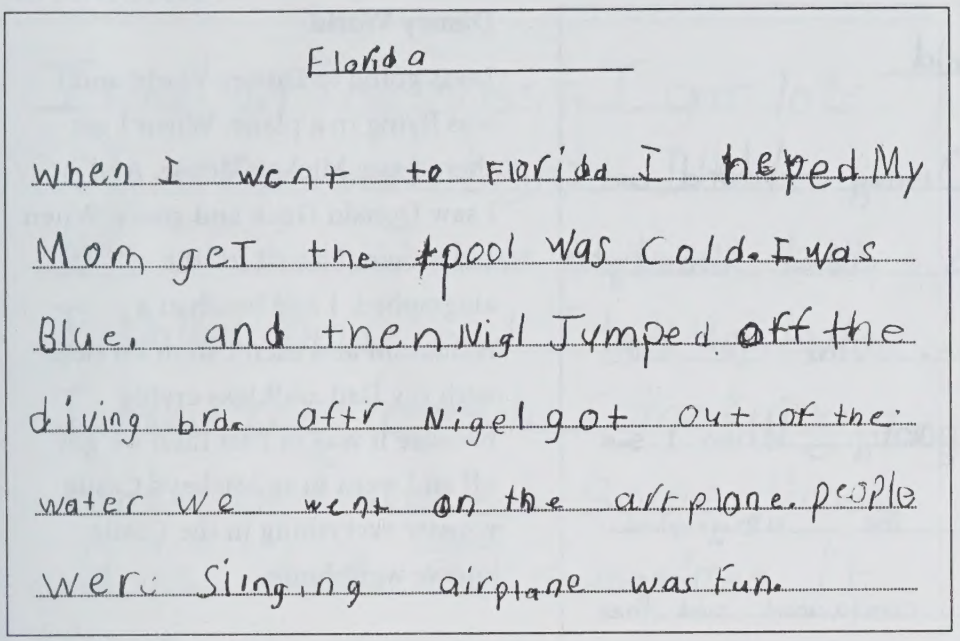
Conventions
- makes inappropriate use of visual presentation (sentence spacing)
- uses the plural form of words incorrectly
- includes an incomplete sentence
- misuses capital letters (e.g., proper nouns, verbs)

Comments

There is an attempt to use spelling strategies.

Grade 2 Level 1: Example 2

"MY ADVENTURE"


Florida
when I went to Florida I heped My Mom geT the pool was Cold. I was Blue. and then Nigl Jumped off the diving brd. aftr Nigel got out of the water we went on the arrplane. people wer: Siinging airplane was fun.

Florida

When I went to Florida I heped My Mom geT the pool was cold. I was Blue. and then Nigl Jumped off the diving brd. aftr Nigel got out of the water we went on the arrplane. people were siinging airplane was fun.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- provides few supporting details related to the story

Communication
- uses few descriptions or connecting words
- the writer's feelings are not evident

Organization
- there is little evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end
- the sequence of the trip is not apparent (only one event)

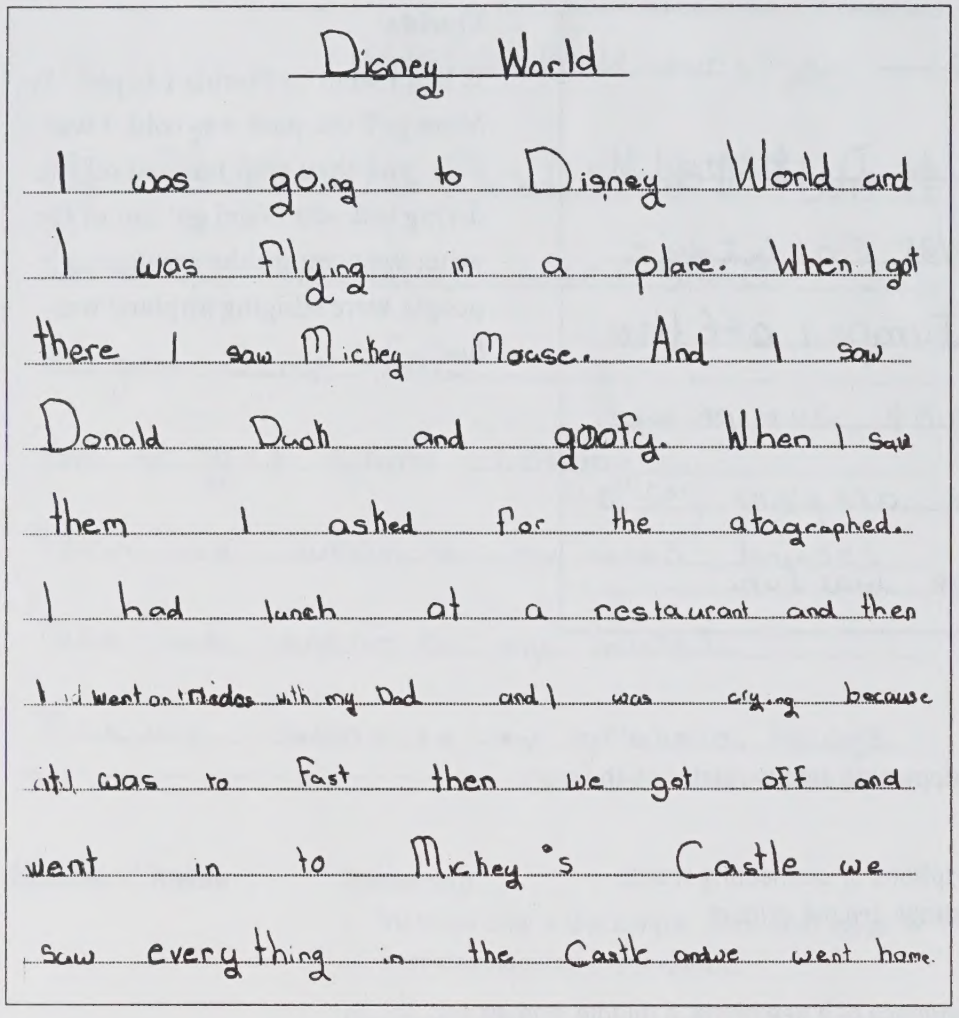
Conventions
- misuses capital letters
- omits words and punctuation

Comments

The student used word endings correctly and has some of the visual presentation elements. The overall organization and lack of detail make it a level 1 story.

Grade 2 Level 2: Example 1

"MY ADVENTURE"



Disney World

I was going to Disney World and I was flying in a plane. When I got there I saw Mickey Mouse. And I saw Donald Duck and goofy. When I saw them I asked for the atagraphed. I had lunch at a restaurant and then I went on rides with my Dad and I was crying because it was to Fast then we got off and went in to Mickey's Castle we saw everything in the Castle andwe went home.

Disney World

I was going to Disney World and I was flying in a plane. When I got there I saw Mickey Mouse. And I saw Donald Duck and goofy. When I saw them I asked for the atagraphed. I had lunch at a restaurant and then I went on rides with my Dad andI was crying because it was to Fast then we got off and went in to Mickey's Castle we saw everything in the Castle andwe went home.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that are connected to the story line
- provides some details

Communication
- the purpose is somewhat evident
- there is some evidence of voice (e.g., the writer was scared and started crying)
- uses some connecting words ("and", "then") to join sentences

Organization
- the story is sequential (shows evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end)

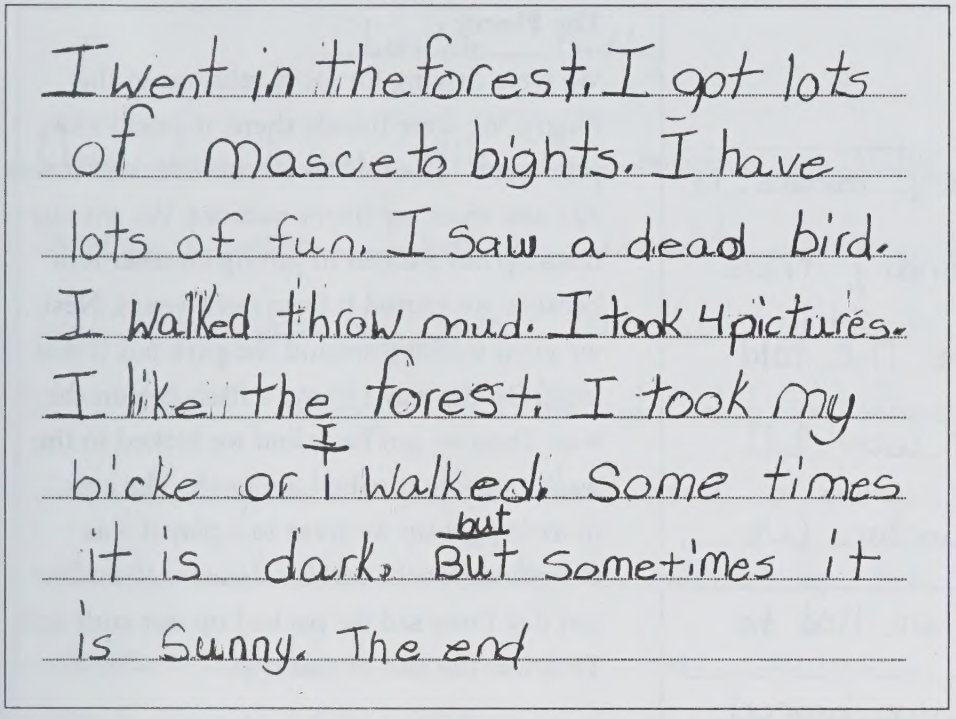
Conventions
- uses capitals for proper nouns (except for "Goofy")
- there is good visual presentation
- has few spelling errors; uses phonetic spelling for an unfamiliar and more difficult word

Comments

The writer seems to lose sight of structure as the story progresses. A very weak ending!

Grade 2 Level 2: Example 2

"MY ADVENTURE"


I went in the forest. I got lots of masceto bights. I have lots of fun. I saw a dead bird. I walked throw mud. I took 4pictures. I like the forest. I took my bicke or I walked. Some times it is dark. But sometimes it is Sunny. The end

My Adventure

I went in the forest. I got lots of masceto bights. I have lots of fun. I saw a dead bird. I walked throw mud. I took 4pictures. I like the forest. I took my bicke or I walked. Some times it is dark, but sometimes it is Sunny. The end

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that are connected to the story line
- provides some supporting details, but not enough to clarify the point of the story

Communication
- there is some evidence of the writer's voice
- has little variation in wording
- uses some descriptive words
- uses one connecting word ("but")

Organization
- there is some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end, but some sentences are placed inappropriately

Conventions
- attempts to use phonetic spelling ("masceto bights" for "mosquito bites" and "bicke" for "bike")
- uses capitals and periods appropriately with few errors

Comments

Uses some simple ideas that could be developed further. Use of more than a single stem ("I went", "I took") needs to be encouraged.

Grade 2 **Level 3: Example 1**

"MY ADVENTURE"

The Pinery

We were driving for fordy minutes to the Piner. We were fineal there. it smeld like pine-netus. The told us the number and it was 121 and thats my libary number. We got our tents up but we had to put up anuther tent because we brorod it from our firends. Nest we went walking around the park but it was long. On the way I found a frish-bee on the way. Then we got back and we bicked to the washroom we brushed my teeth. The nest morning got up we went to a play it was tonight we wached it was awsone. It was the last day I was sad we packed up our stuff and. That was the end of that trip.

The Pinery

We were driving for fordy minutes to the Pinery. We were finealy there. it smeld like pine-netus. The told us the number and it was 121 and thats my libary number. We got our tents up but we had to put up anuther tent because we brorod it from our firends. Nest we went walking around the park but it was long. On the way I found a frish-bee on the way. Then we got back and we bicked to the washroom we brushed my teeth. The nest morning got up we went to a play it was tonight we wached it was awsone. It was the last day I was sad we packed up our stuff and. That was the end of that trip.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- provides several details to describe the adventure

Communication

- uses different connecting words to link simple sentences
- the adventure unfolds clearly with several descriptive words

Organization

- the organization of events is done appropriately with a beginning, a middle, and an end

Conventions

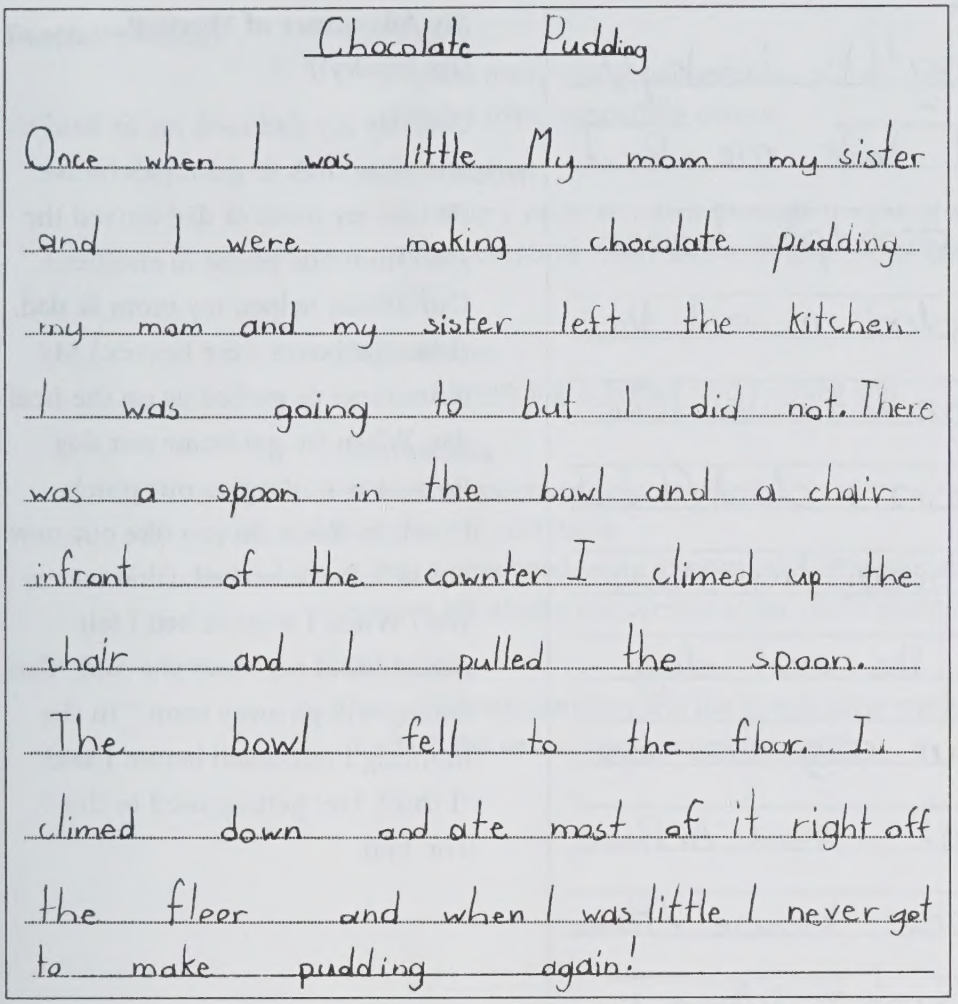
- uses many of the conventions accurately
- phonetic spelling is used for more difficult words

Comments

There is a good "flow" to the story. There are frequent spelling errors, although there were good attempts made to use phonetic spelling for unfamiliar words (e.g., "pine-netus" for "pine needles", "brorod" for "borrowed").

Grade 2 Level 3: Example 2

"MY ADVENTURE"



Chocolate Pudding

Once when I was little My mom my sister and I were making chocolate pudding my mom and my sister left the kitchen I was going to but I did not. There was a spoon in the bowl and a chair infront of the cownter I climed up the chair and I pulled the spoon. The bowl fell to the floor. I climed down and ate most of it right off the fleer and when I was little I never got to make pudding again!

Chocolate Pudding

Once when I was little My mom my sister and I were making chocolate pudding my mom and my sister left the kitchen I was going to but I did not. There was a spoon in the bowl and a chair infront of the cownter I climed up the chair and I pulled the spoon. The bowl fell to the floor. I climed down and ate most of it right off the floor and when I was little I never got to make pudding again!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the ideas presented support and clarify the development of the story

Communication
- the story clearly describes an adventure
- there is evidence of the writer's perspective

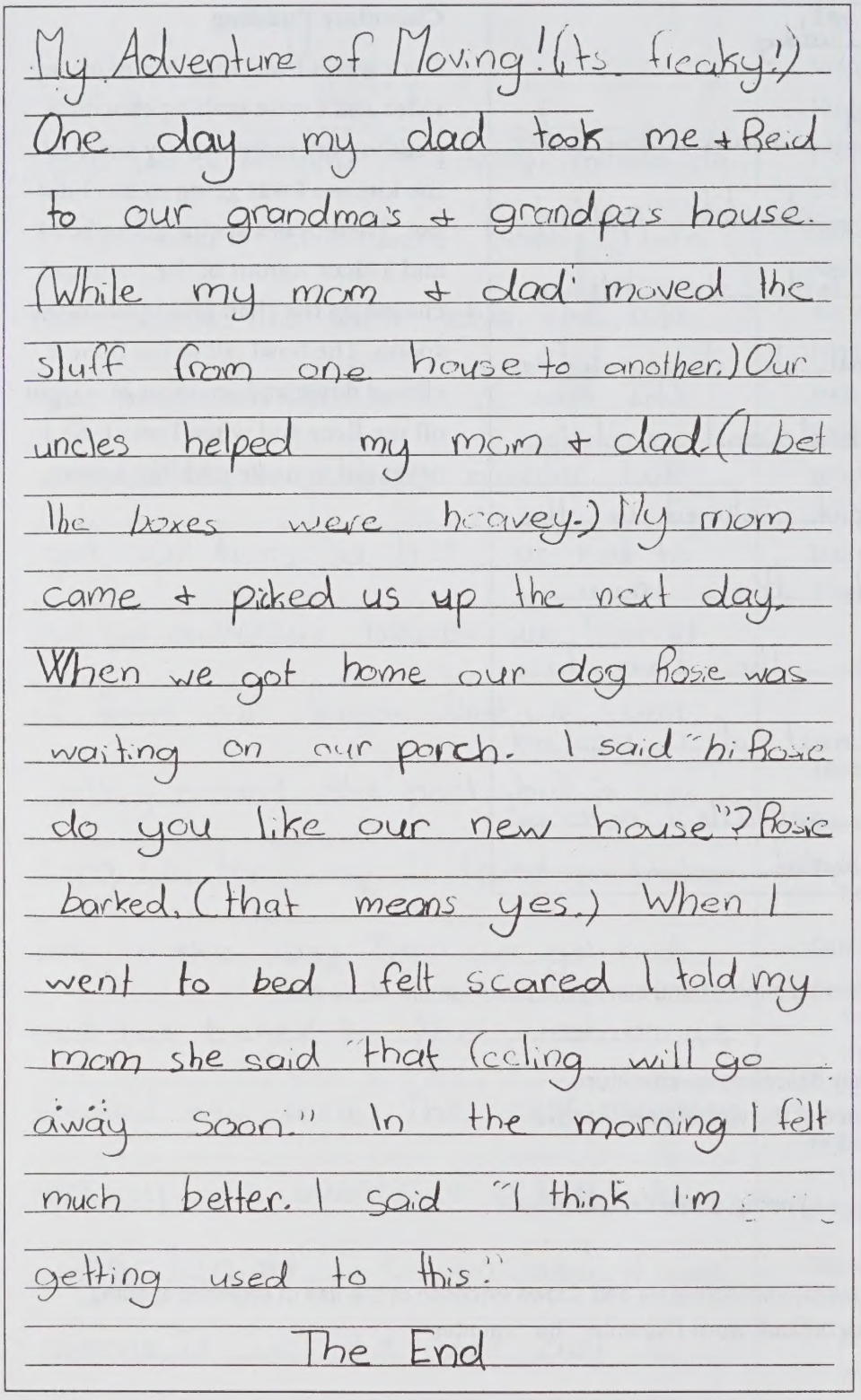
Organization
- the story has a beginning, a middle, and an end

Conventions
- uses many conventions accurately and shows evidence of the use of phonetic spelling only for a more difficult word ("cownter" for "counter")

Comments
This is a simple, logically developed story.

Grade 2 **Level 4: Example 1**

"MY ADVENTURE"



My Adventure of Moving! (Its freaky!)
One day my dad took me + Reid to our grandma's + grandpas house. (While my mom + dad moved the stuff from one house to another.) Our uncles helped my mom + dad. (I bet the boxes were heavey.) My mom came + picked us up the next day. When we got home our dog Rosie was waiting on our porch. I said "hi Rosie do you like our new house"? Rosie barked. (that means yes.) When I went to bed I felt scared I told my mom she said "that feeling will go away soon." In the morning I felt much better. I said "I think I'm getting used to this."
The End

My Adventure of Moving!
(its freaky!)

One day my dad took me & Reid to our grandma's & grandpa's house. (While my mom & dad moved the stuff from one house to another.) Our uncles helped my mom & dad. (I bet the boxes were heavey.) My mom came & picked us up the next day. When we got home our dog Rosie was waiting on our porch. I said "hi Rosie do you like our new house"? Rosie barked, (that means yes.) When I went to bed I felt scared I told my mom she said "that feeling will go away soon." In the morning I felt much better. I said "I think I'm getting used to this." The End

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes many well-developed ideas
- provides many supporting details

Communication
- the writer's voice is evident (through the use of asides and parentheses)
- not an adventure in terms of excitement level, but the writer's experience is expressed clearly

Organization
- has a beginning, a middle, and a strong end

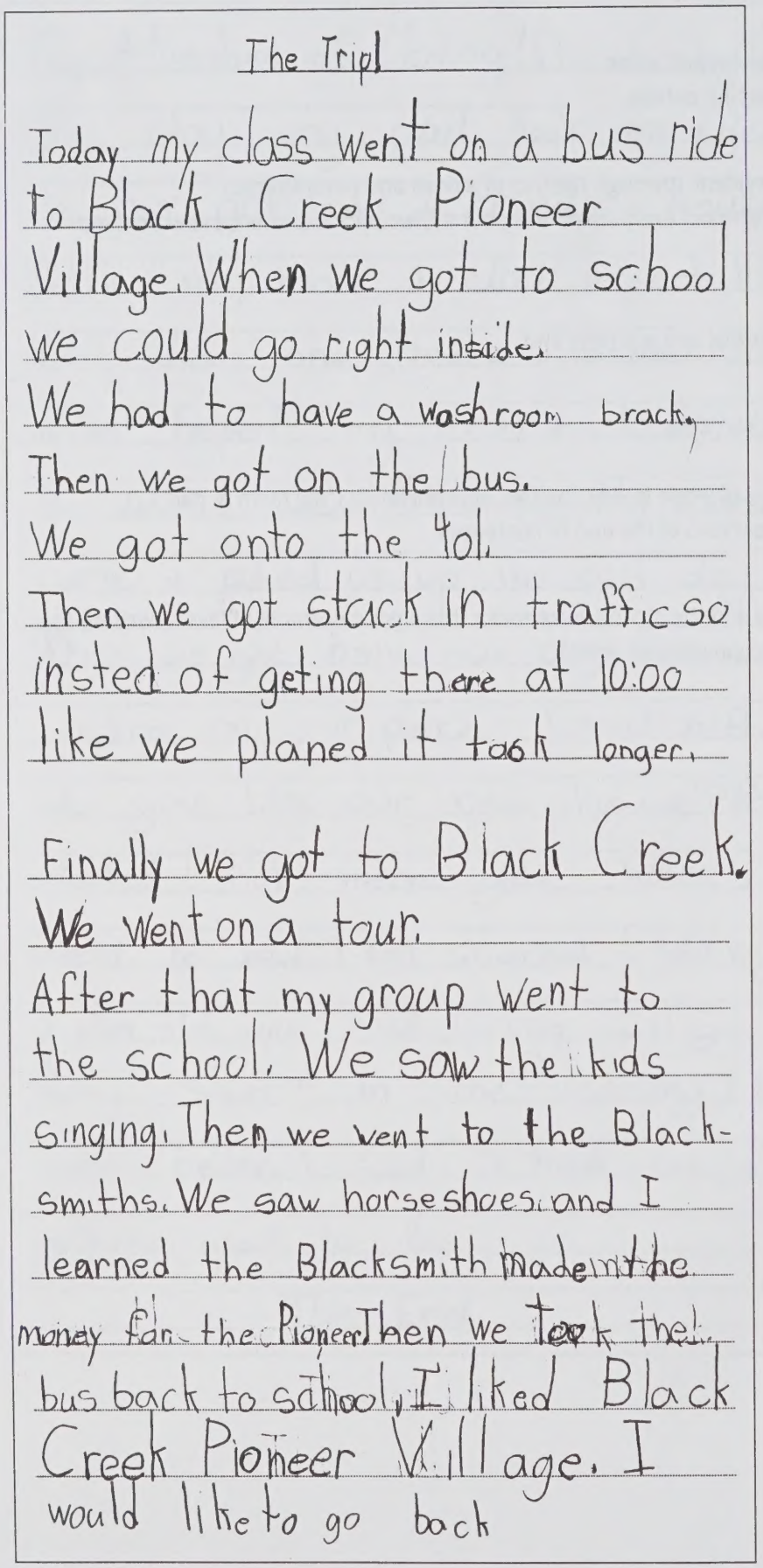
Conventions
- uses question marks correctly
- attempts quotations
- has a developed sense of when to use capitals appropriately ("my mom & dad")
- does not always use periods at the end of sentences

Comments

The well-developed story and the strong voice make this a good example of level 4 writing for Grade 2. The writer uses conventions well!

Grade 2 **Level 4: Example 2**

"MY ADVENTURE"



The Trip!

Today my class went on a bus ride to Black Creek Pioneer Village. When we got to school we could go right inside.
We had to have a washroom brack.
Then we got on the bus.
We got onto the 401.
Then we got stack in traffic so insted of geting there at 10:00 like we planed it took longer.

Finally we got to Black Creek.
We went on a tour.
After that my group went to the school. We saw the kids singing. Then we went to the Blacksmiths. We saw horseshoes and I learned the Blacksmith made the money for the Pioneer. Then we took the bus back to school. I liked Black Creek Pioneer Village. I would like to go back

The Trip!

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes supporting details that enhance the story (traffic jam, role of blacksmith)

Communication
- writer has a clear voice in which feelings are expressed (wants to go back)
- uses varied sentence structure
- uses a variety of connecting words effectively

Organization
- the writing has a beginning, a middle, and a strong ending

Conventions
- most words are spelled correctly; there is a phonetic approach to some words ("geting" for "getting", "insted" for "instead")
- attempts hyphenation
- uses punctuation appropriately for the most part
- the visual presentation helps the reader

Comments

The story is well developed through the use of supporting details, a good choice of linking vocabulary, and the presence of the author's voice, which is apparent in the ending.

Grade 3

A Letter (to a Favourite Author)

A Letter (to a Favourite Author)

The Task

Students were asked to write a friendly letter to an author of one of their favourite books, using webs to develop their thoughts, feelings, opinions, and experiences for the content of their letters. They were reminded to check their work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation, while working with partners.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for specific purposes and to specific audiences;
- write materials that show a growing ability to express their points of view and to reflect on their own experiences;
- organize information into short paragraphs that contain a main idea and related details;
- begin to use compound sentences and sentences of varying length;
- revise and edit their work, using feedback from the teacher and their peers;
- proofread and correct their final drafts;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 3 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 3, students will:

- use irregular plurals correctly;
- use the apostrophe in common contractions;
- use exclamation marks appropriately;
- use a variety of sources (e.g., dictionaries, word lists, computers) to check the spelling of unfamiliar words;
- choose words that are most appropriate for their purposes;
- select and correctly use the format suited to their purpose for writing (e.g., letters).

Previous Learning Experiences

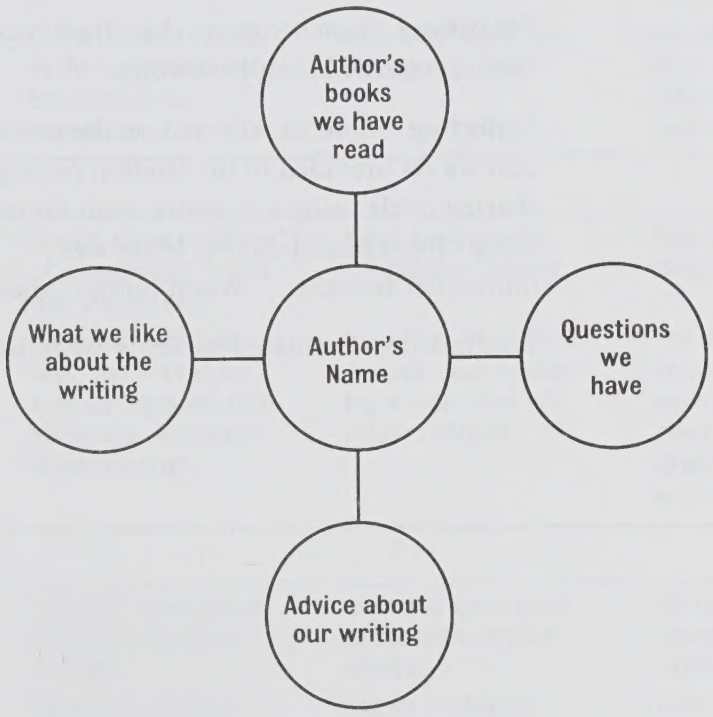
It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- being read to
- reading independently
- reading and writing letters
- using visual organizers (planners)
- using a structure for peer revision and editing
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting, Part A. Teachers read or reread a book with students and then discussed it with the class. Students then brainstormed questions they might ask the author as preparation for writing a letter to him or her. Teachers used web diagrams (or another planner) to record the content that might be included in the letter. Students then chose their favourite authors and individually repeated the brainstorming/web activity.



Prewriting, Part B. Teachers used a shared-writing activity to compose a letter to an author using the web diagram (or other planner) completed with the class in Part A. They then used a think-aloud activity to help students with the letter format, purpose, and audience. The sample letter was posted for reference.

Prewriting, Part C. Teachers reviewed with students the criteria for an effective letter, such as the following, which were posted for reference:

- Ideas are clear and easy to understand.
- The main ideas and details go together.
- The purpose for the letter is clear. (You can tell why the letter was written.)
- The letter has a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- The sentences are different lengths.
- The letter is organized in paragraph form.
- The sentences have correct punctuation (e.g., periods, question marks, commas).
- Capitals are used correctly.
- The spelling is correct.

Drafting. Each student drafted a letter to his or her favourite author, using a web or other planner as a guide.

Revising. Teachers reviewed with their students the revision checklist provided in the student packages, and then students worked in small groups or in the class as a whole to reread their drafts and make any necessary changes.

Editing. Either working with partners or as a class with the teacher's help, students made further changes to their work using an editing checklist such as the one provided in the student package (or any similar alternative).

Publishing. Students wrote their final copies, checking them carefully to ensure that they represented their best work.

Reflecting. Students reflected on the process they had used by completing the reflection sheets provided in the student package or by participating in an activity such as a sharing circle using a sentence stem for each student to complete orally (e.g., "The thing I liked best about my letter was ..." or "The author I wrote to was.... I chose him or her because.... When [author's name] writes back, I hope he or she says ...").

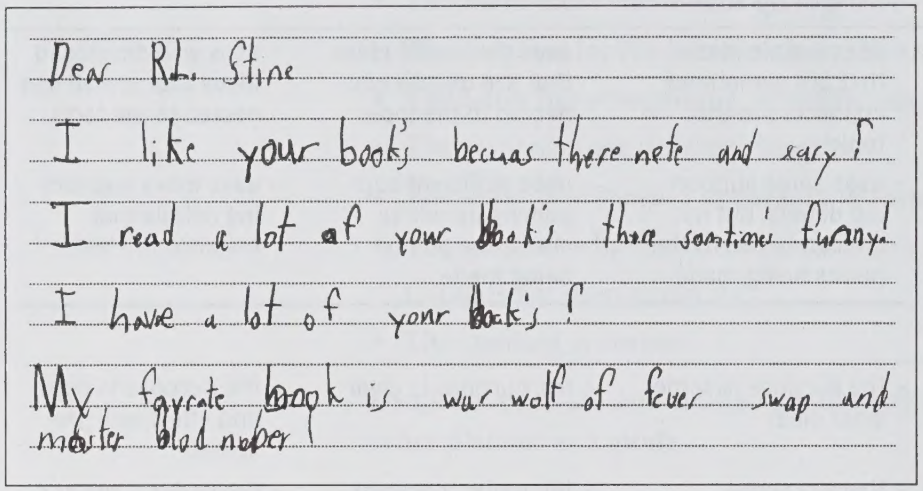
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 3: Rubric for a Letter (to a Favourite Author)

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas and connection to the topic	– uses only a few simple ideas that are not connected to the topic	– uses simple ideas that are sometimes connected to the topic	– uses developed ideas that are usually connected to the topic	– uses well-developed ideas that are all connected to the topic
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details	– uses very few supporting details	– uses some supporting details, but not enough to clarify the points being made	– uses sufficient supporting details to clarify the points being made	– uses many supporting details that enhance the letter
Communication	**In the student's work:**			
– purpose: to write a letter to an author	– the purpose of the letter is unclear	– the purpose is somewhat clear	– the purpose is clear	– the purpose is clear and effectively presented
– voice (feelings, opinions, attitudes)	– the writer's voice is not evident	– there is some evidence of the writer's voice	– the writer's voice is clearly evident	– the writer's voice is clear, providing a sense of who the writer is and making the letter seem genuine
– word use and vocabulary	– the vocabulary is very limited	– there is some variety in the vocabulary	– there is great variety in the vocabulary	– the extensive vocabulary is effective and engaging
– sentence variety and literary devices	– the same sentence stem is used repetitively	– there is some variety in the sentences used but also some repetition	– several kinds of sentences are used	– the style is varied with a good mix of different kinds of sentences
Organization	**The student's writing:**			
– overall structure (beginning, middle, end)	– shows little evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end	– shows some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end	– has a beginning, a middle, and an end	– has a clear beginning, middle, and end
– paragraph structure	– there is no evidence of paragraphs (the sentences are not related)	– some attempt has been made to structure paragraphs (the sentences are somewhat related)	– there are short paragraphs, each containing a main idea and related details	– the main idea and supporting details of each paragraph are clear, and the paragraphs are linked to each other
Conventions	**The student:**			
– grammar, spelling, punctuation	– seldom uses the conventions studied correctly	– correctly uses some of the conventions studied	– correctly uses most of the conventions studied	– correctly uses all or almost all of the conventions studied
	– makes frequent errors in spelling	– uses conventional spellings for familiar words and some phonetic spelling for more difficult words	– shows increased accuracy in spelling by using spelling strategies (e.g., phonics, rules, sources)	– makes almost no errors in spelling
– visual presentation (format of a friendly letter: date, salutation, body, closing)	– includes only the body of the letter	– includes some components of a letter	– includes most components of a letter	– uses a standard letter format with visual appeal

Grade 3 Level 1: Example 1

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR


Dear RL. Stine
I like your book's becuas there nete and scary?
I read a lot of your book's thre sometime's funny!
I have a lot of your book's?
My favrate book is war wolf of fever swap and moster blod nober 1

Dear R.L. Stine
I like your book's becuas there nete and scary? I read a lot of your book's there sometime's funny!
I have a lot of your book's?
My favrate book is war wolf of fever swap and moster blod nober 1

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only a few simple ideas
- provides few supporting details

Communication
- the purpose of letter is unclear
- the vocabulary is very limited
- the same sentence stem is used repetitively

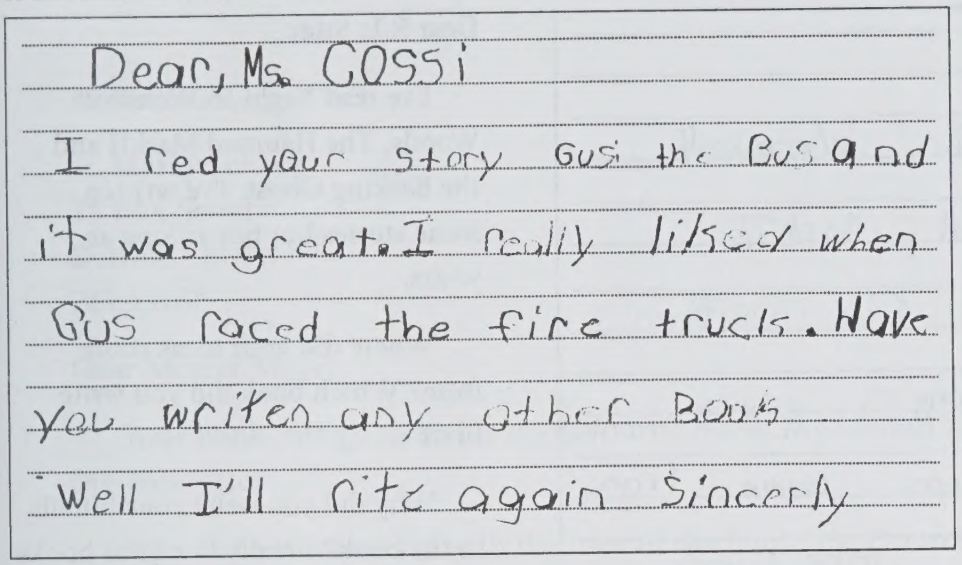
Organization
- the sentences are a list of separate ideas
- there is no evidence of paragraphs (sentences are not related)

Conventions
- uses few of the conventions studied correctly
- makes frequent spelling errors

Comments
Has some ideas but they are not clearly outlined.

Grade 3 Level 1: Example 2

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR


Dear, Ms. COSSi
I red your story Gus the Bus and
it was great. I really liked when
Gus raced the fire trucks. Have
you writen any other Books
Well I'll rite again Sincerly

Dear, Ms. COSSi
I red your story Gus the Bus and it was great. I really liked when Gus raced the fire truck. Have you writen any other Book
Well I'll rite again Sincerly

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only a few simple ideas
- provides few supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is somewhat clear (level 2 achievement)
- there is some evidence of the writer's voice (level 2 achievement)
- the vocabulary is very limited
- the same sentence stem is used repetitively (half the sentences begin with "I")

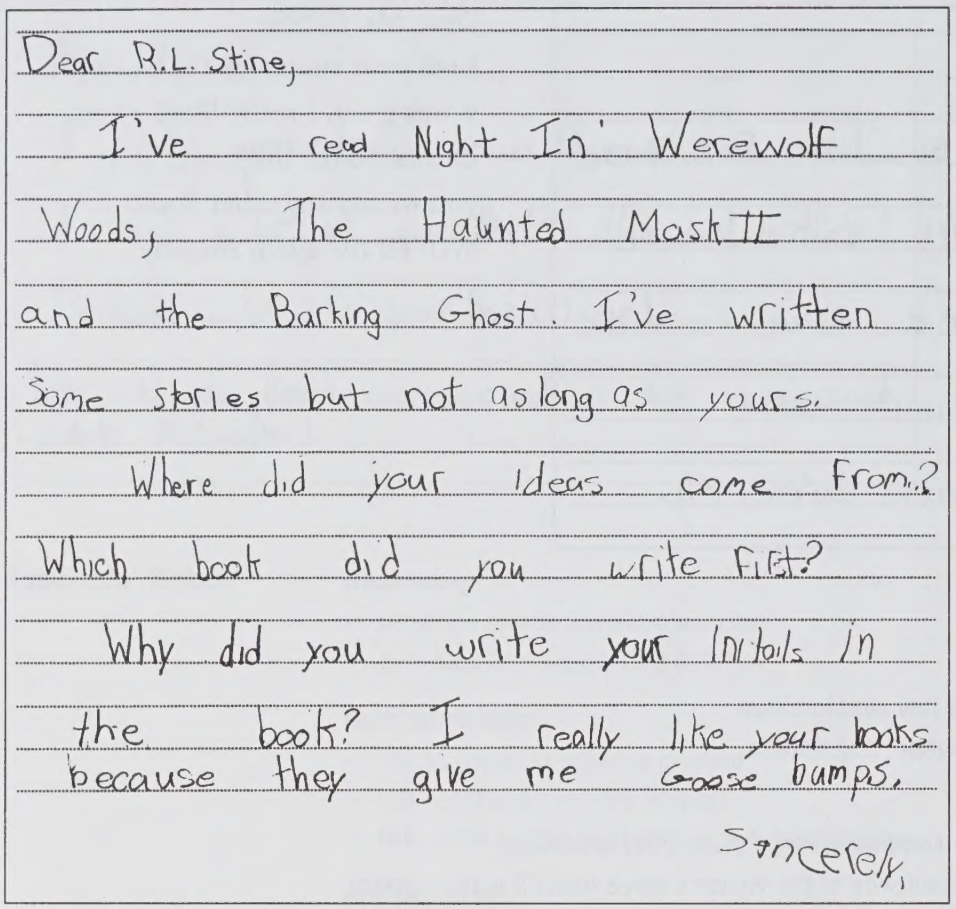
Organization
- there is no evidence of paragraphs

Conventions
- uses few of the conventions studied correctly
- makes frequent spelling errors

Comments
This has all the components of a letter, but the format is not accurate.

Grade 3 Level 2: Example 1

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR



Dear R.L. Stine,

I've read Night In Werewolf Woods, The Haunted MaskII and the Barking Ghost. I've written some stories but not as long as yours.

Where did your ideas come from? Which book did you write first?

Why did you write your initails in the book? I really like your books because they give me Goose bumps.

Sincerely,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that are connected to the topic
- provides some supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is clear (level 3 achievement)
- there is some evidence of the writer's voice
- there is some variety in the vocabulary
- there is some variety of sentences used, with some repetition

Organization
- the letter has some sense of a beginning, a middle, and an end
- paragraph structure is attempted

Conventions
- correctly uses some of the conventions studied
- shows increased accuracy in spelling through the use of spelling strategies (level 3 achievement)
- includes some components of a letter

Comments
There are no spelling errors; however, the vocabulary is limited. The last sentence is clever.

Grade 3 Level 2: Example 2

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR

1998 06 03

St. Meray School
35 Fox Street
Detroit, Ontario
ZOO N0P

Dear Mercer Mayer,

Your book just go to bed is my favourite book. My second favourite book is Just Me and My Babysitter.

How did you come up with the idea of the book Just Go to Bed and Me and My Babysitter? How many books have you made Mercer Mayer? Did you ever have kids? What is the first book in the world you have made? Are you married Mercer Mayer?
I hope you can answer all of my questions by NOW.

FROM,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that are connected to the topic
- provides some supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is somewhat clear
- there is some evidence of the writer's voice
- the vocabulary is very limited (level 1 achievement)
- there is some variety of sentences used, with some repetition

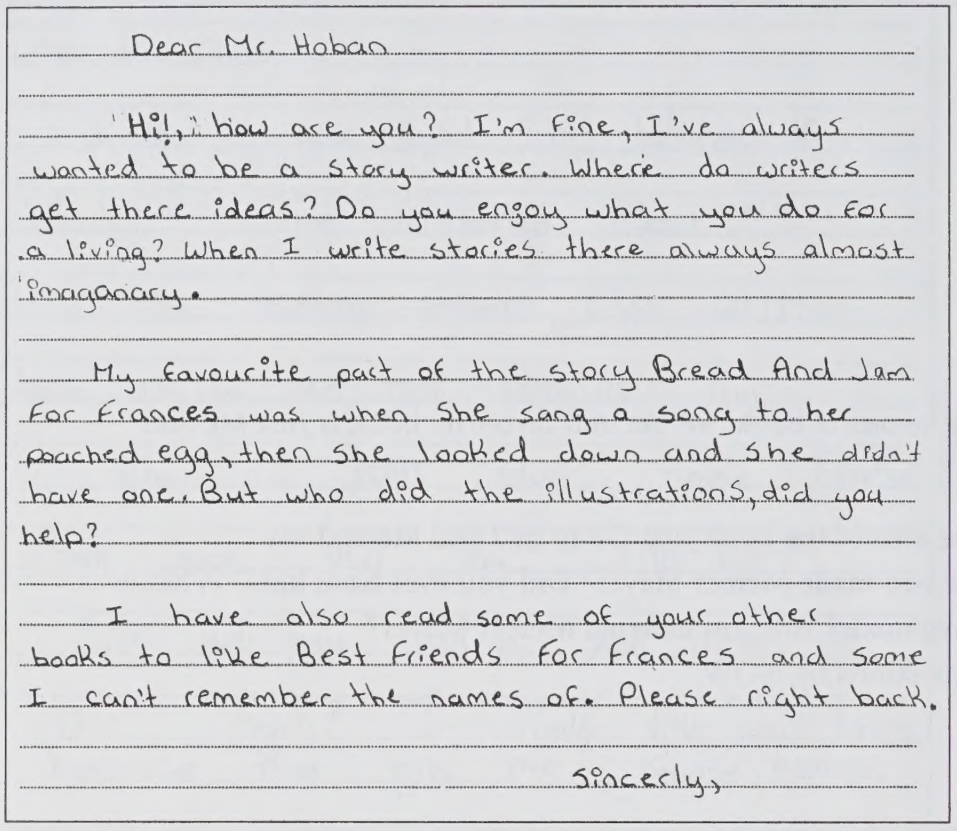
Organization
- the letter has some sense of a beginning, a middle, and an end
- paragraph structure is attempted
- content in paragraph switches topics

Conventions
- uses some of the conventions studied correctly
- uses conventional spelling for familiar words
- includes all components of a letter, but with inconsistent punctuation (level 3 achievement)

Comments
There is evidence of the writer's curiosity in posing questions to the author. Organization in two paragraphs shows sense of structure.

Grade 3 Level 3: Example 1

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR



Dear Mr. Hoban

Hi!, how are you? I'm fine, I've always wanted to be a story writer. Where do writers get there ideas? Do you engoy what you do for a living? When I write stories there always almost imaganary.

My favourite part of the story Bread And Jam For Frances was when she sang a song to her poached egg, then she looked down and she didn't have one. But who did the illustrations, did you help?

I have also read some of your other books to like Best Friends For Frances and some I can't remember the names of. Please right back.

Sincerly,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes developed ideas, with most connected to the topic
- provides sufficient supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is clear
- the voice gives a sense of who the writer is, which makes the letter seem genuine
- the vocabulary used is appropriate
- several kinds of sentences are used

Organization
- the letter has a beginning, a middle, and an end
- there are short paragraphs with a main idea and related details

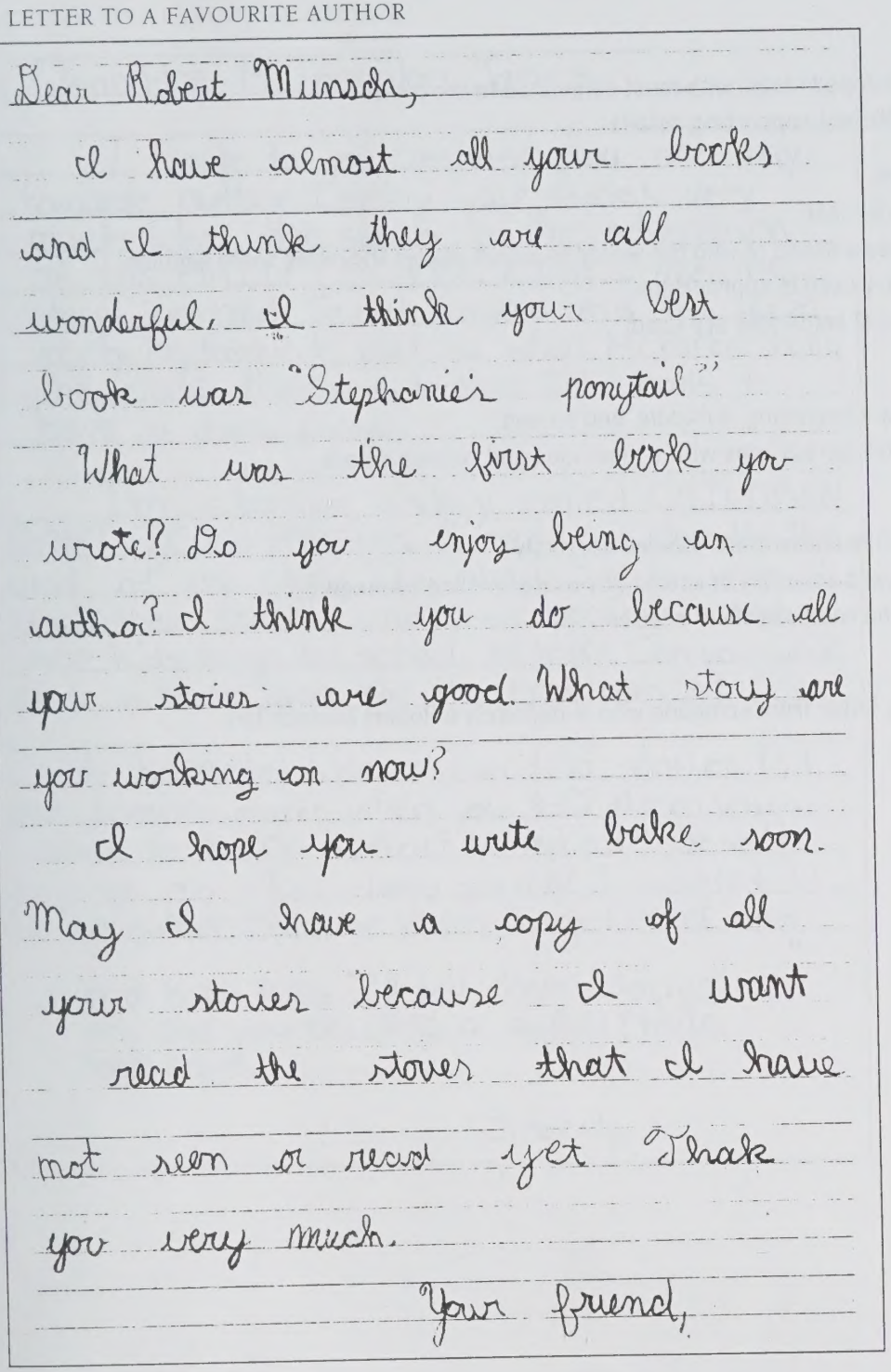
Conventions
- uses most of the conventions studied correctly
- shows increased accuracy in spelling through the use of spelling strategies (e.g., phonics, rules, sources)
- includes all components of a letter

Comments

This is a well-presented, friendly letter with clear organization of thought in three paragraphs.

Grade 3 Level 3: Example 2

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR



Dear Robert Munsch,

I have almost all your books and I think they are all wonderful. I think your best book was "Stephanie's ponytail"

What was the first book you wrote? Do you enjoy being an author? I think you do because all your stories are good. What story are you working on now?

I hope you write bake soon. May I have a copy of all your stories because I want read the stories that I have not seen or read yet Thak you very much.

Your friend,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- includes developed ideas, with most connected to the topic
- provides sufficient supporting details

Communication

- the purpose is clear
- the voice gives a sense of who the writer is, which makes the letter seem genuine
- the vocabulary used is appropriate
- several kinds of sentences are used

Organization

- the letter has a beginning, a middle, and an end
- there are short paragraphs with a main idea and related details

Conventions

- uses most of the conventions studied correctly
- shows increased accuracy in spelling by using spelling strategies
- includes all the components of a letter

Comments

This is a friendly letter from someone who is definitely a Robert Munsch fan.

Grade 3 Level 4: Example 1

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR

Dear Mrs M. Thornton Jones

I wrote to you because you are my favourite author. I enjoy your stories very much like the series of the adventure of the BAILEY SCHOOL KIDS! I like the story named Triplet Trouble and the pizza party. My favourite part is when Mr. Parker tells the class theyhave to earn light balls to have a pizza party.

I'm starting a story called CHILDREN DON'T TEACH PARENTS. I need an idea for the end of my story. It's about 3 girls who teach their parents and their parents want their kids to go to school to learn. Can you write back with an idea for the end please?

My parents like my writing stories. Did your parents agree when you told them you wanted to be an author? My editor doesn't change my story does yours? I wanted to be an author because when I get older and and have kids I'll tell them stories. Why did you become a author? Write back soon.

Sincerly,

Dear Mrs M. Thornton Jones

I wrote to you because you are my favourite author. I enjoy your stories very much like the series of the adventure of the BAILEY SCHOOL KIDS! I like the story named Triplet Trouble and the pizza party. My favourite part is when Mr.Parker tells the class theyhave to earn light balls to have a pizza party.

I'm starting a story called CHILDREN DON'T TEACH PARENTS. I need an idea for the end of my story. It's about 3 girls who teach their parents and their parents want their kids to go to school to learn. Can you write back with an idea for the end please?

My parents like my writing stories. Did your parents agree when you told them you wanted to be an author? My editor doesn't change my story does yours? I wanted to be an author because when I get older and and have kids I'll tell them stories. Why did you become a author? Write back soon.

Sincerly,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes well-developed ideas, all connected to the topic
- provides many supporting details that enhance the letter

Communication
- the purpose is clear and effectively presented
- feelings are expressed through effective word selection
- the vocabulary used is effective and engaging
- the style is varied with a good mix of different kinds of sentences

Organization
- the letter has a clear beginning, a middle, and an end
- the main idea and related supporting details of each paragraph are clear

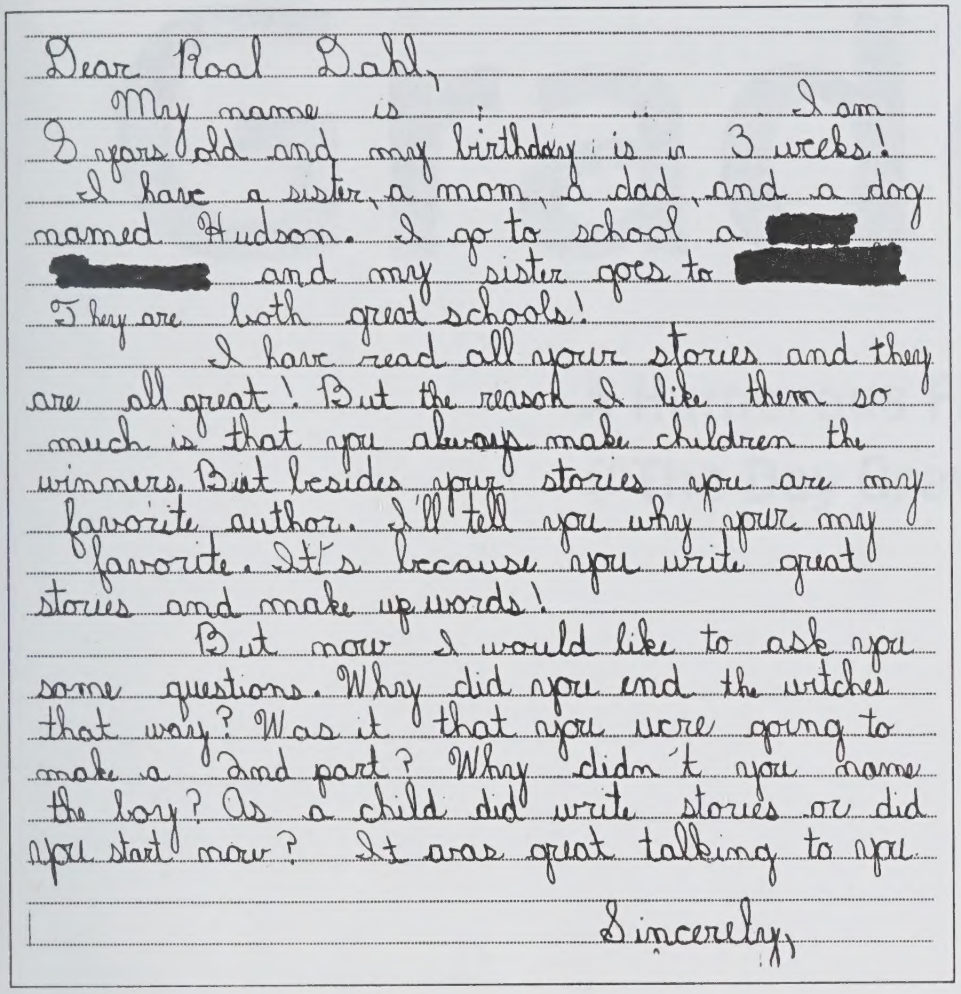
Conventions
- correctly uses all or most of the conventions studied
- makes almost no errors in spelling

Comments

The student created a visually appealing letter that presents well-supported ideas.

Grade 3 Level 4: Example 2

A LETTER TO A FAVOURITE AUTHOR



Dear Roal Dahl,

My name is [student's name]. I am 8 years old and my birthday is in 3 weeks! I have a sister, a mom, a dad, and a dog named Hudson. I go to school a [school name] and my sister goes to[school name]. They are both great schools!

I have read all your stories and they are all great! But the reason I like them so much is that you always make children the winners. But besides your stories you are my favorite author. I'll tell you why your my favorite. It's because you write great stories and make up words!

But now I would like to ask you some questions. Why did you end the witches that way? Was it that you were going to make a 2nd part? Why didn't you name the boy? As a child did write stories or did you start now? It was great talking to you.

Sincerely,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes well-developed ideas that are all connected to the topic
- provides many supporting details that enhance the letter

Communication
- the purpose is clear and effectively presented
- feelings are expressed through effective word selection
- the vocabulary used is effective and engaging
- the style is varied with a good mix of different kinds of sentences

Organization
- the letter has a clear beginning, a middle, and an end
- the main idea and related details of each paragraph are clear

Conventions
- uses all or almost all of the conventions studied correctly
- make almost no errors in spelling
- uses a standard letter format with visual appeal

Comments

The writer asks thoughtful questions and makes interesting observations. As a Roald Dahl fan I too like it when he makes up words. What fun!

Grade 4

A Humorous Fictional Story ("The Day Gravity Failed")

A Humorous Fictional Story ("The Day Gravity Failed")

The Task

Students were asked to write a humorous fictional story describing a specific event that could have occurred in their lives on a day that gravity failed. They were asked to use a story map to develop their ideas and to suggest a solution to the challenges faced on that day. They were reminded to work with peer editors to check each other's work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes and to specific audiences;
- organize and develop ideas using paragraphs (e.g., to tell a story);
- use simple and compound sentences and vary their sentence structure;
- produce pieces of writing using a variety of specific forms (e.g., a humorous story);
- revise and edit their work, using feedback from the teacher and their peers;
- proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, punctuation, and spelling;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation) specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 4 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 4, students will:

- use a variety of sentence types correctly and appropriately (e.g., questions, exclamations);
- choose words that are most effective for their purpose (e.g., to describe vividly);
- use a dictionary and a thesaurus;
- use proper form for paragraphs (e.g., indentation, spacing, margins).

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

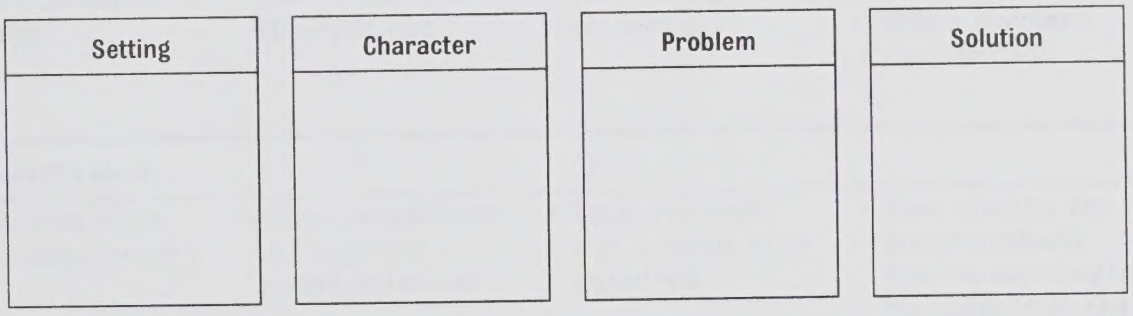
- using visual organizers for planning a story
- process writing
- using a dictionary and thesaurus for editing
- reading and writing humorous stories
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting. Teachers introduced the concept of gravity by showing a video clip, illustration, or photograph that illustrated people or objects suspended in space or by describing or reading a description of how the force of gravity affects us. Students then discussed what life on earth is like with gravity and what it would be like without gravity (e.g., if you brushed your teeth without gravity, the toothpaste would float away, the toothbrush might only brush the top teeth, and the tap water would float upward in the room).

Using a think-pair-share activity, students thought of scenarios from their daily lives that would be humorous if "gravity failed for a day" and then discussed their ideas with partners. As students orally presented their scenarios, teachers helped them organize their thoughts for their stories by charting their ideas under the headings "Setting", "Character", "Problem", and "Solution":



Drafting. After reviewing the components of a story map (presented in the student package) and discussing how a first draft of a story is created from the ideas written on a story map, each student constructed his or her own story map and then wrote a first draft of his or her story. (The class might also cooperatively develop a set of achievement-level descriptors at this time.)

Revising. Teachers reviewed with their students the criteria for a quality story using the checklist included in the student package (or any similar alternative).

Editing. Teachers reviewed with students the criteria for revising and editing using the checklists provided in the student package (or any similar alternatives). Students revised or edited their own work and then worked in pairs to complete a peer revision or edit of their work.

Publishing. Students wrote their final copies using resources such as computers, dictionaries, and thesauruses.

Reflecting. After finishing their final copies, students reflected on the process they had used by filling out the reflection sheet provided in the student package.

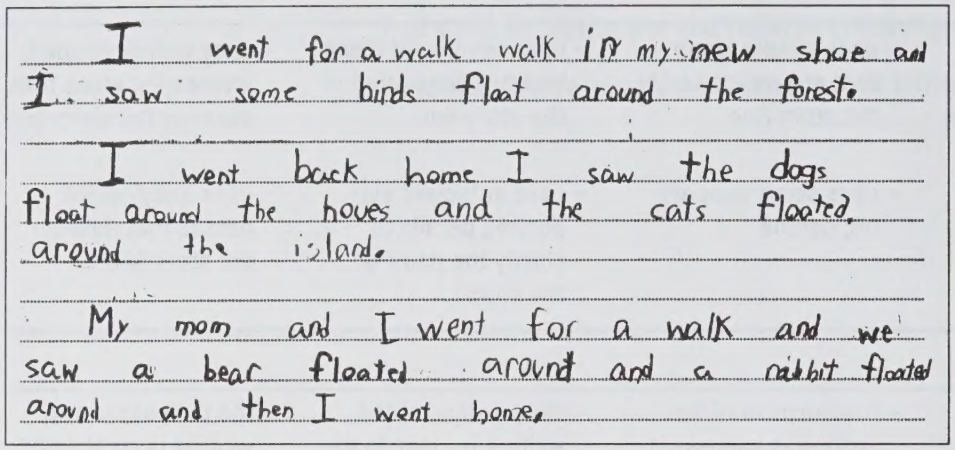
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 4: Rubric for a Humorous Fictional Story

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas and connection to the story line	– uses only a very few simple ideas that have little or no connection to the story line	– uses simple ideas that are connected to the story line	– uses developed ideas that are connected to the story line	– uses well-developed, interesting ideas that advance the story line
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details	– uses very few supporting details	– uses some supporting details	– uses sufficient supporting details to clarify the point of the story	– uses imaginative details that develop the story line
Communication	**In the student's story:**			
– purpose: to write a humorous story	– the purpose of the writing is unclear to the reader	– the purpose of the writing is somewhat clear to the reader	– the purpose of the writing is clear to the reader	– the purpose of the writing is clear and engages the reader
– voice (feelings, opinions, attitudes)	– the writer's voice is not evident	– there is some evidence of the writer's voice	– there is clear evidence of the writer's voice	– the writer's voice is clear and sustains the reader's interest
– word use and vocabulary (e.g., descriptive words)	– the vocabulary is limited or used inappropriately, with few descriptive words	– a limited variety of vocabulary is used appropriately but with limited effect	– a wide variety of vocabulary is used appropriately to add descriptive detail to the story	– an extensive vocabulary creates images or pictures for the reader
– sentence variety	– only simple sentences are used	– some variety in sentences is evident, but the types of sentences are limited	– a variety of sentences are used	– a wide variety of sentences enhance the writing
– use of literary elements such as humour and exaggeration	– literary devices are not used	– there is limited use of literary devices	– some literary devices are used	– a number of literary devices have been used effectively
Organization	**The student's story:**			
– overall structure (beginning, middle, and end)	– has no clear beginning, middle, or end	– shows some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end	– has a clear beginning, a middle, and a logical end	– flows smoothly, progressing logically from the beginning to the middle to the end
– paragraph structure	– contains ideas and details that are unconnected and has no paragraph structure	– includes ideas and details that are somewhat connected within paragraphs	– has sentences that are linked together in paragraphs	– has sentences that are clearly organized in paragraphs to develop the story line
Conventions	**The student:**			
– grammar, spelling, punctuation	– uses very few of the conventions studied correctly	– uses some of the conventions studied correctly	– uses most of the conventions studied correctly	– uses all or almost all of the conventions studied correctly
– visual presentation (e.g., indentations, spacing, margins, title)	– produces a visual presentation that is not clear	– produces a visual presentation that is basically clear	– produces a clear visual presentation	– produces a clear and effective visual presentation that enhances the story

Grade 4 Level 1: Example 1

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



I went for a walk walk in my new shoe and I saw some birds float around the forest.

I went back home I saw the dogs float around the houes and the cats floated around the island.

My mom and I went for a walk and we saw a bear floated around and a rabbit floated around and then I went home.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only a few simple ideas
- provides few supporting details

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is unclear to the reader
- the writer's voice is not yet evident
- the vocabulary is limited and few descriptive elements are included
- only simple sentences are used; literary elements of humour and exaggeration are not evident

Organization
- the beginning, middle, and end are unclear
- the ideas or sentences are unconnected, and the paragraphs are incomplete

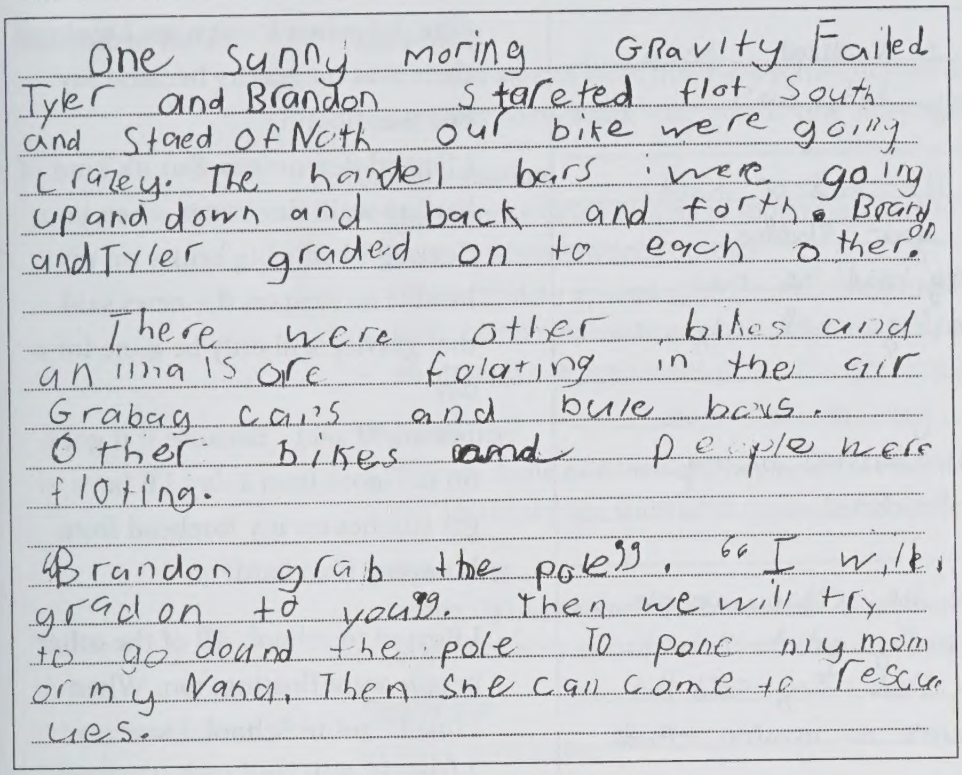
Conventions
- correctly uses some of the conventions studied
- produces a visual presentation that is somewhat clear

Comments

Although the printing is neat, the lack of details and clear purpose make it a level 1.

Grade 4 Level 1: Example 2

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



One sunny moring GRavity Failed Tyler and Brandon stareted flot South and Staed of Noth our bike were going crazey. The handel bars were going up and down and back and forth. Brandon and Tyler graded on to each other.

There were other bikes and animals are folating in the air Grabag cans and bule boxs. Other bikes and people were floting.

"Brandon grab the pole". "I will grad on to you". then we will try to go dound the pole To pone my mom or my Nana. Then she can come to rescue ues.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes little description
- provides a few supporting details

Communication
- the purpose is stated but not developed
- words are omitted

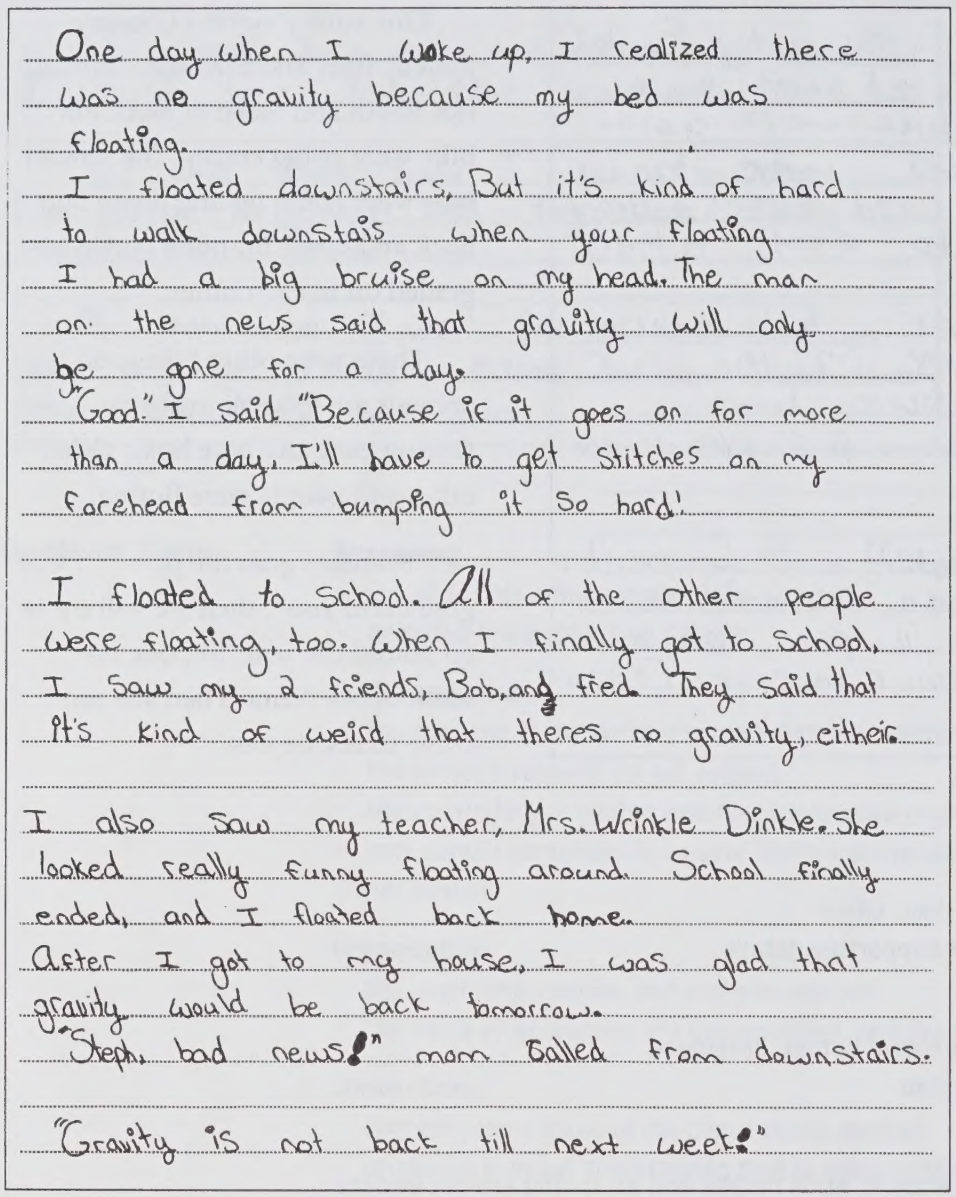
Organization
- the beginning is clear, but a middle and an ending are not evident
- some sentences are not complete; periods are missing

Conventions
- there are many spelling inconsistencies and many spelling errors in simple words
- word endings are frequently omitted

Comments
Several letter reversals and incomplete sentences made this story difficult to read.

Grade 4 Level 2: Example 1

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



One day when I woke up, I realized there was no gravity because my bed was floating.
I floated downstairs, But it's kind of hard to walk downstais when your floating I had a big bruise on my head. The man on the news said that gravity will only be gone for a day.
"Good." I said. "Because if it goes on for more than a day, I'll have to get stitches on my forehead from bumping it so hard!

I floated to school. All of the other people were floating, too. When I finally got to School, I saw my 2 friends, Bob, and fred. They said that it's kind of weird that theres no gravity, eitheir.

I also saw my teacher, Mrs. Wrinkle Dinkle. She looked really funny floating around. School finally ended, and I floated back home.
After I got to my house, I was glad that gravity would be back tomorrow.
"Steph, bad news!" mom Called from downstairs.

"Gravity is not back till next week!"

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that have some connection to the story line
- provides some supporting details (the story mostly makes sense)

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is somewhat clear to the reader
- there is some evidence of voice
- the vocabulary is used appropriately but with limited effect
- some compound sentences are used, but the variety of sentences is limited
- an attempt has been made to use literary elements of humour and exaggeration

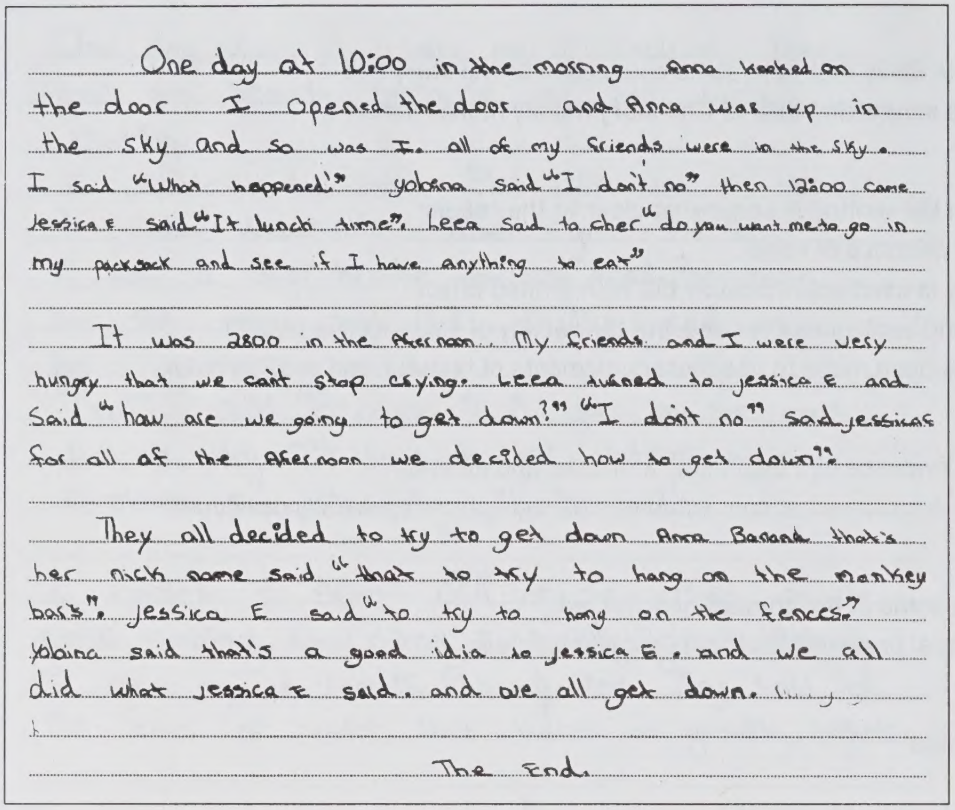
Organization
- there is some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end
- the sentences are somewhat connected and paragraphs are partially developed

Conventions
- correctly uses some of the conventions studied
- produces a visual presentation that is somewhat clear

Comments
Spelling is very good!

Grade 4 Level 2: Example 2

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



One day at 10:00 in the morning Anna knoked on the door I opened the door and Anna was up in the sky and so was I. all of my friends were in the sky. I said "What happened!" yolaina said "I don't no" then 12:00 came Jessica E said "It lunch time". Leea said to cher"do you want me to go in my packsack and see if I have anything to eat"

It was 2:00 in the Afernoon. My friends and I were very hungry that we can't stop crying. Leea turned to jessica E and Said "how are we going to get down?" "I don't no" said jessica E for all of the Afternoon we decided how to get down".

They all decided to try to get down Anna Banana that's her nick name said "that to try to hang on the monkey bar's". jessica E said "to try to hang on the fences." yolaina said that's a good idia to jessica E. and we all did what jessica E said. and we all get down.

The End.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes ideas that have some connection to the story line
- provides some supporting details (the story mostly makes sense)

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is somewhat clear to the reader
- there is some evidence of the writer's voice
- the vocabulary is used appropriately but with limited effect
- some compound sentences are used, but the variety of sentences is limited
- an attempt has been made to use literary elements of humour and exaggeration

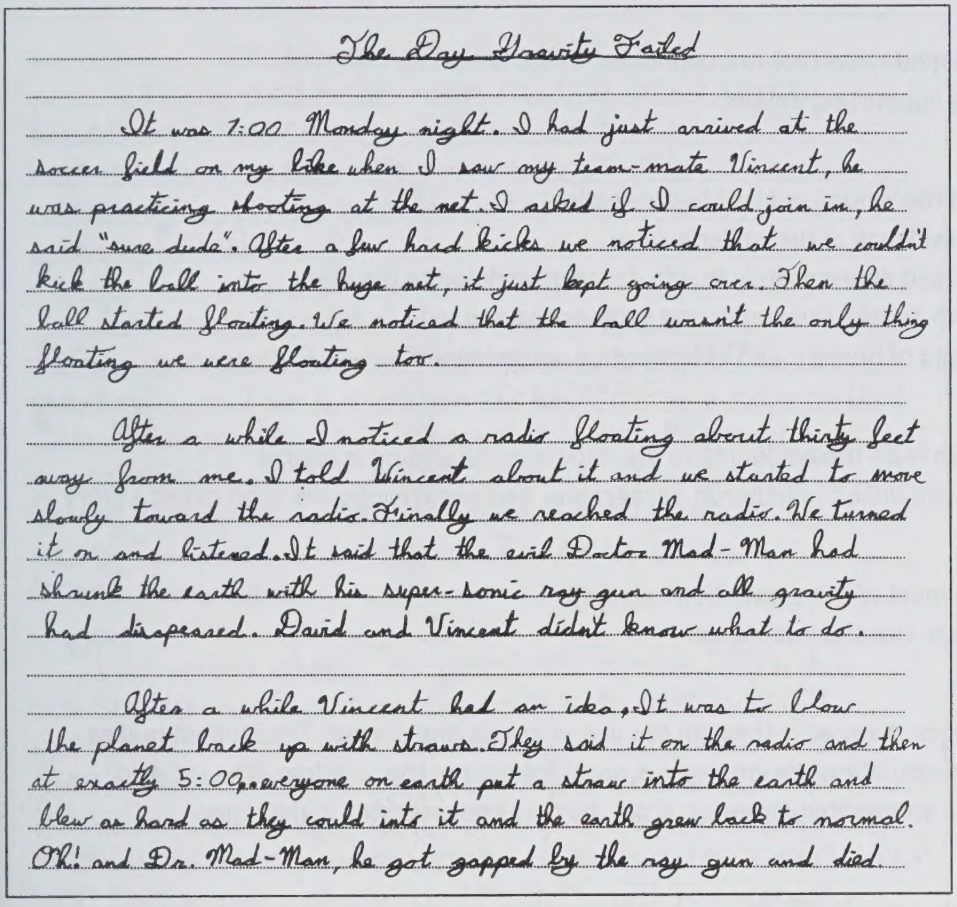
Organization
- there is some evidence of a beginning, a middle, and an end
- the sentences are somewhat connected and paragraphs are partially developed

Conventions
- correctly uses some of the conventions studied
- produces a visual presentation that is somewhat clear

Comments
The student communicates surprise and anxiety to the reader and would benefit from instruction on how to use dialogue.

Grade 4 Level 3: Example 1

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



The Day Gravity Failed

It was 7:00 Monday night. I had just arrived at the soccer field on my bike when I saw my team-mate Vincent, he was practicing shooting at the net. I asked if I could join in, he said "sure dude". After a few hard kicks we noticed that we couldn't kick the ball into the huge net, it just kept going over. Then the ball started floating. We noticed that the ball wasn't the only thing floating we were floating too.

After a while I noticed a radio floating about thirty feet away from me. I told Vincent about it and we started to move slowly toward the radio. Finally we reached the radio. We turned it on and listened. It said that the evil Doctor Mad-Man had shrunk the earth with his super-sonic ray gun and all gravity had disapeared. David and Vincent didn't know what to do.

After a while Vincent had an idea, It was to blow the planet back up with straws. They said it on the radio and then at exactly 5:00p.meveryone on earth put a straw into the earth and blew as hard as they could into it and the earth grew back to normal. Oh! and Dr. Mad-Man, he got zapped by the ray gun and died

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes developed ideas that are connected to the story line
- provides many supporting details

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is clear to the reader
- there is clear evidence of the writer's voice
- vocabulary is used appropriately to add descriptive detail to the story
- a variety of both simple and compound sentences are used
- literary elements of humour and exaggeration are evident

Organization
- the progression from the beginning to the middle to the ending is logical
- the sentences are linked together in paragraphs, and paragraphs are used to tell a story

Conventions
- correctly uses most of the conventions studied
- produces a clear visual presentation

Comments

The student engages the reader through the use of asides and speech. The student makes minor errors in punctuation. We enjoyed his novel solution to the problem. Who is David? I assume he is the storywriter. However, if not, he only appears once in the story.

Grade 4 Level 3: Example 2

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"

"The day gravity failed."

Tiffanie and Grace were racing on a race track and Grace was in the lead by 1m. It was 12:00 on a Saturday morning. Tiffanie was catching up. Then suddenly that was the time gravity failed.

In 1 milasecond they were in the air. Tiffanie asked Grace "What's wrong?" "Did I ever tell you I was motion sick?" Grace squealed "No." Tiffanie said looking puzzled. "The gravity must have failed!" Yelled Tiffanie. "Ecxactly" Grace snapped. "Then how are we supposed to race?" Tiffanie wondered. I don't know Grace answered.

"I have an idea!" suggested Grace. "Maybe we should have a flying contest." "Yeah!" exlaimed Tiffanie. "We could fly home after." Grace won the race. When they were almost home Grace whisperd "Oh, no, I have to brush my teeth or else my mom won't let me go to a concert." "Well I hope you deal with it". Said Tiffanie. By the time Grace came home the gravity came back and she got to go to the concert.

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes developed ideas that are connected to the story line
- provides many supporting details (the story makes sense)

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is clear to the reader
- there is clear evidence of the writer's voice
- vocabulary is used appropriately to add descriptive detail to the story
- a variety of both simple and compound sentences are used
- literary elements of humour and exaggeration are evident

Organization
- the progression from the beginning to the middle to the ending is logical
- sentences are linked together in paragraphs, and paragraphs are used to tell a story

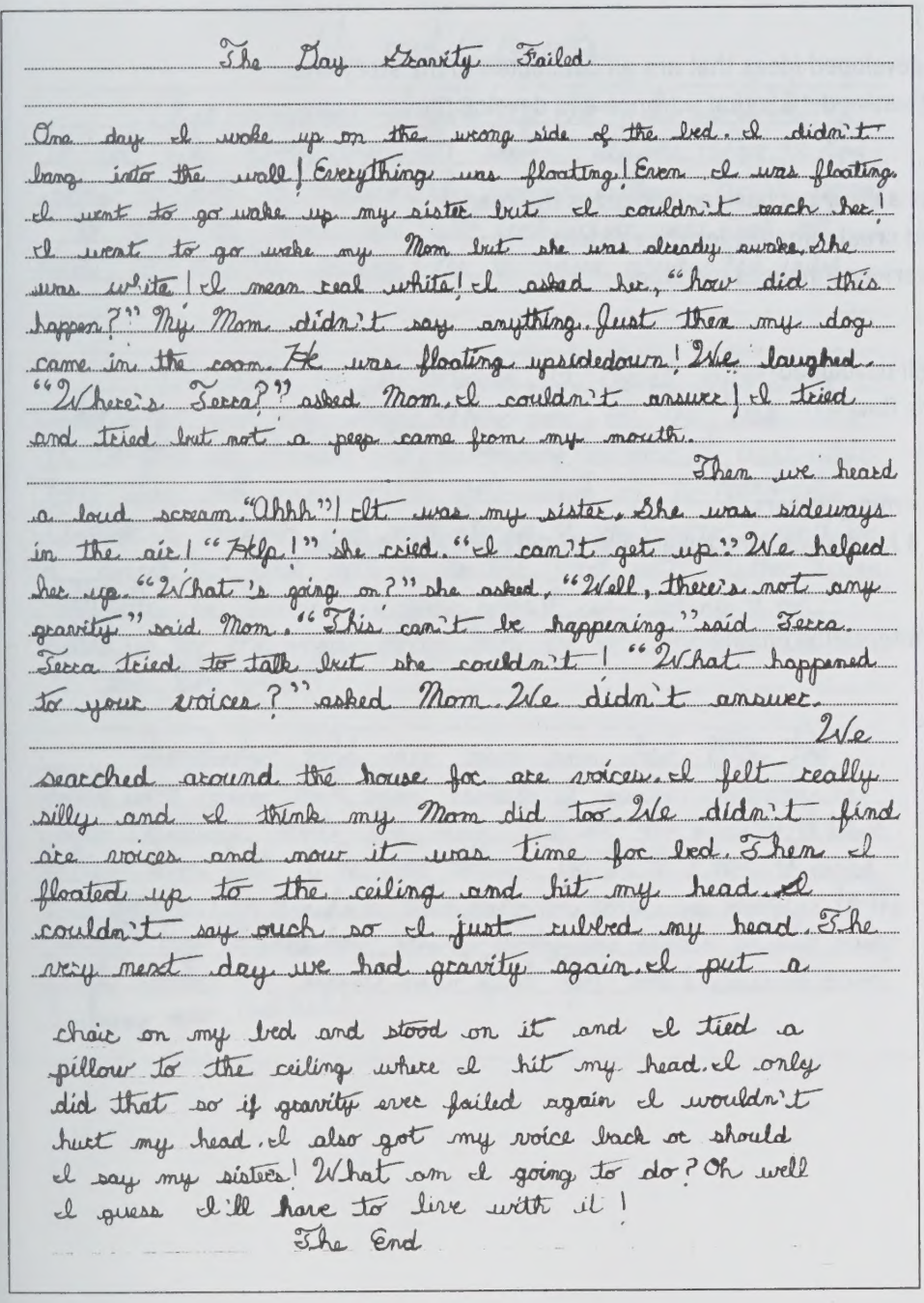
Conventions
- correctly uses most of the conventions studied
- produces a visual presentation that is clear

Comments

The use of humour and synonyms helps engage and clarify the piece for the reader.
The writer fails to use capitals in the title.

Grade 4 Level 4: Example 1

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



The Day Gravity Failed

One day I woke up on the wrong side of the bed. I didn't bang into the wall! Everything was floating! Even I was floating. I went to go wake up my sister but I couldn't reach her! I went to go wake my Mom but she was already awake. She was white! I mean real white! I asked her, "how did this happen?" My Mom didn't say anything. Just then my dog came in the room. He was floating upsidedown! We laughed. "Where's Terra?" asked Mom. I couldn't answer! I tried and tried but not a peep came from my mouth.

Then we heard a loud scream. "Ahhh"! It was my sister. She was sideways in the air! "Help!" she cried. "I can't get up." We helped her up. "What's going on?" she asked. "Well, there's not any gravity" said Mom. "This can't be happening" said Terra. Terra tried to talk but she couldn't! "What happened to your voices?" asked Mom. We didn't answer.

We searched around the house for are voices. I felt really silly and I think my Mom did too. We didn't find are voices and now it was time for bed. Then I floated up to the ceiling and hit my head. I couldn't say ouch so I just rubbed my head. The very next day we had gravity again. I put a chair on my bed and stood on it and I tied a pillow to the ceiling where I hit my head. I only did that so if gravity ever failed again I wouldn't hurt my head. I also got my voice back or should I say my sisters! What am I going to do? Oh well I guess I'll have to live with it!

The End

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The End

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes well-developed ideas that are all connected to the story line
- provides imaginative details that advance and develop the story line

Communication
- the writing has a clear purpose and engages the reader
- the words used create images for the reader
- the sentence variety enhances the story

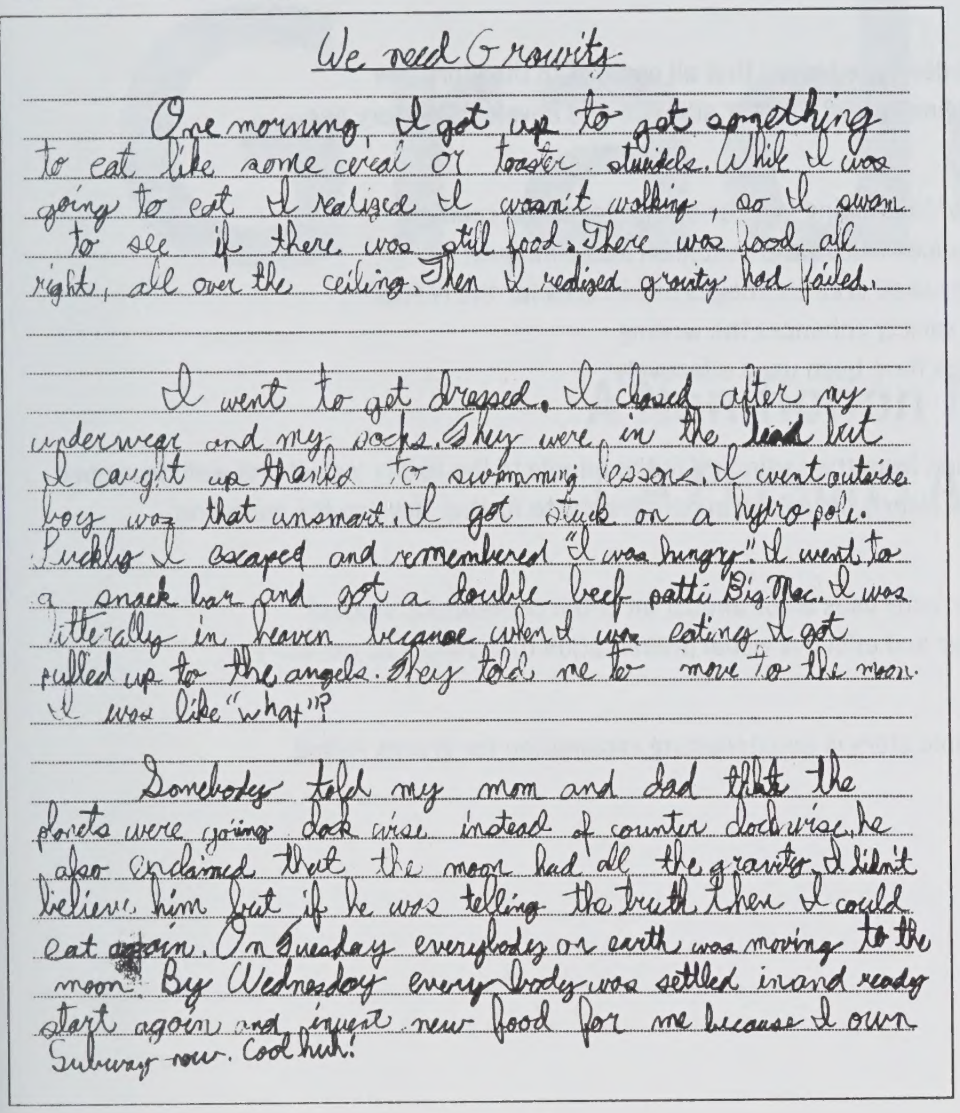
Organization
- the story is well developed
- the paragraphs flow

Conventions
- there are a few minor errors
- overall a level 4 for conventions regardless of different indentations

Comments
The story has an interesting ending.

Grade 4 Level 4: Example 2

"THE DAY GRAVITY FAILED"



We need Gravity

One morning, I got up to get something to eat like some cereal or toaster strudels. While I was going to eat I realized I wasn't walking, so I swam to see if there was still food. There was food all right, all over the ceiling. Then I realized gravity had failed.

I went to get dressed. I chased after my underwear and my socks. They were in the lead but I caught up thanks to swimming lessons. I went outside boy was that unsmart. I got stuck on a hydro pole. Luckly I escaped and remembered "I was hungry". I went to a snack bar and got a double beef patti Big Mac. I was litterally in heaven because when I was eating I got pulled up to the angels. They told me to move to the moon. I was like "what"?

Somebody told my mom and dad that the planets were going clock wise instead of counter clockwise, he also exclaimed that the moon had all the gravity. I didn't believe him but if he was telling the truth then I could eat again. On Tuesday everybody on earth was moving to the moon. By Wednesday everybody was settled inand ready start again and invent new food for me because I own Subway now. Cool huh!

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes well-developed ideas that all connect to the story line
- provides imaginative details that advance and develop the story line

Communication
- the purpose of the writing is clear and engages the reader
- the writer's voice is clear and sustains reader interest
- the vocabulary used creates images or pictures for the reader
- the sentence variety enhances the writing
- literary devices have been used effectively

Organization
- the progression from the beginning to the middle to the end is logical and well developed
- sentences are clearly organized in paragraphs to further develop the story line

Conventions
- the writer correctly uses all or almost all of the conventions studied
- there is a clear and effective visual presentation that enhances the story

Comments

This most enjoyable story is an interesting explanation for gravity failing.

Grade 5

A Non-fiction Report
("A Person I Admire")

A Non-fiction Report ("A Person I Admire)"

The Task

Students were asked to write a non-fiction report on a person they admire (e.g., an author, an inventor, a famous Canadian, an athlete, a family member), using a planning web and a report planner to help them record, jot notes, and summarize information. They were asked to organize information using well-developed paragraphs that provided relevant supporting details. They were also expected to use a variety of sentences. Students were reminded to work with peer editors to check each other's work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes;
- organize information to convey a central idea using well-developed paragraphs that focus on a main idea and give some relevant supporting details;
- use simple, compound, and complex sentences;
- produce pieces of writing using a variety of specific forms and materials from other media (e.g., as sources of information);
- revise and edit their work, seeking feedback from others and focusing on content, organization, and the appropriateness of the vocabulary for the audience;
- proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, punctuation, and spelling;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation) specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 5 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 5, students will:

- use levels of language appropriate to their purpose;
- use a variety of resources to confirm spelling (e.g., a dictionary, CD-ROM).

Previous Learning Experiences

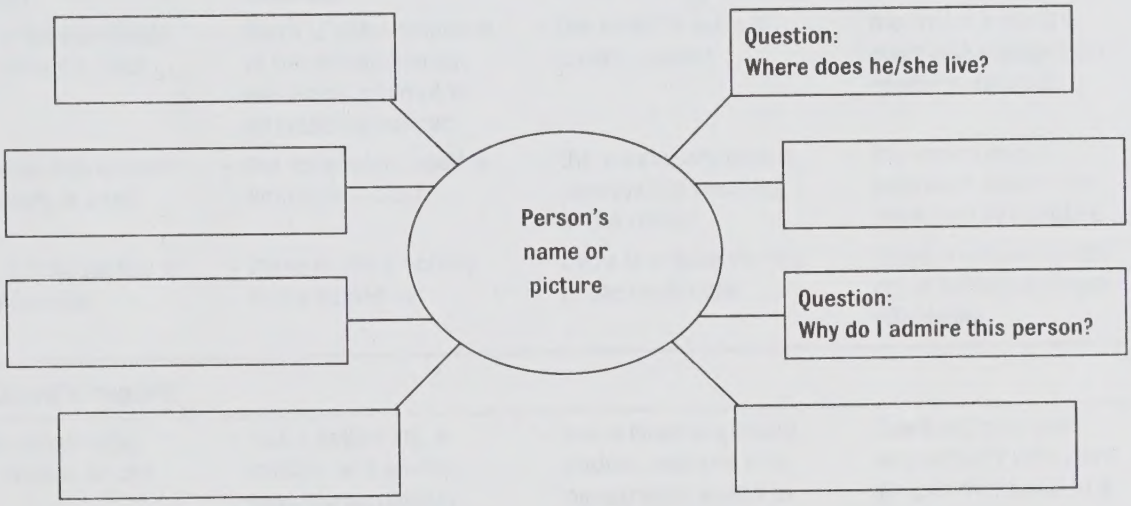
It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- process writing
- using visual organizers
- using a dictionary and a thesaurus for editing
- using non-fiction materials and writing non-fiction reports
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting. In the centre of a planning web drawn on chart paper, teachers placed the name and photo of a familiar famous personality and then worked with students to generate questions to help determine why this person is admired, recording these on the planning web. Teachers then modelled on chart paper how to select and sequence the questions so that the information produced is logical and connected.



Drafting. Students each selected a "Person I Admire" and formulated questions about this individual using the class chart as a guide. They then completed any necessary research required, as well as the "Report Plan" forms in their student packages. Teachers reviewed with students how to write the first draft of a non-fiction report from the information included in the report plans, and students wrote their first drafts.

Revising. Teachers reviewed with their students the criteria for a quality non-fiction report using the checklist included in the student package (or any similar alternative).

Editing. Teachers reviewed with students the criteria for revising and editing using the checklists provided in the student package (or any similar alternatives). Students revised or edited their own work and then worked in pairs to complete a peer revision or edit of their work before writing the final copy.

Publishing. Students wrote their final copies using resources such as computers, dictionaries, and thesauruses.

Reflecting. After finishing their final copies, students reflected on the process they had completed by filling out the reflection sheets provided in their student packages.

Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 5: Rubric for a Non-fiction Report

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of the ideas and connection to the topic	– uses only simple ideas, some of which are off-topic	– uses simple ideas that usually support the topic	– uses developed ideas that support the topic	– uses well-developed ideas that support the topic effectively
– understanding of the topic	– shows limited understanding of the topic	– shows some evidence of understanding the topic	– shows a general understanding of the topic	– shows a thorough understanding of the topic
	– has a conclusion that is unclear	– has a conclusion that is not entirely clear	– has a clear conclusion that summarizes some of the ideas presented	– has a clear conclusion that summarizes all the ideas presented
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details (research sources)	– appears to have based the report only on personal knowledge	– appears to have based the report mostly on a single source	– appears to have used information based on both personal knowledge and other sources	– appears to have used information from a variety of sources effectively
Communication	**In the student's report:**			
– purpose (to write a report)	– the topic is unclear and is described with limited detail and accuracy	– the topic is identified and described with some detail and accuracy	– the topic is clearly identified and described with good detail and accuracy	– the topic is clearly identified and thoroughly and accurately described
– voice (appeal to the reader through content, style, or vocabulary)	– there is little evidence of the writer's voice	– there is some evidence of the writer's voice and some attempt to interest the reader	– the writer's voice is clearly evident	– the writer's voice is clear and engages the reader's interest
– word use and vocabulary	– only basic and unclear vocabulary is used	– the vocabulary used is limited but clear	– the vocabulary clearly conveys the meaning of the writer	– the vocabulary is extensive, clear, creative, and descriptive
– sentence variety (structure, type, length)	– there is little variety in the sentences	– there is some variety in the sentences	– there is a good variety in the sentences	– there is extensive variety of sentences used effectively
Organization	**The student's report:**			
– overall structure (beginning, middle, end, links)	– has no clear beginning, middle, or end	– has a beginning, a middle, and an end that are somewhat linked	– has a clear beginning, middle, and end with paragraphs linked to the main topic and an end that is linked with the beginning	– flows logically and sequentially with paragraphs that build to a conclusion
– paragraph structure	– contains ideas and details that are unconnected, with no paragraph structure	– includes ideas and details that are somewhat connected within the paragraphs	– has paragraphs that each contain similar or linked ideas and supporting details	– has paragraphs that each contain ideas and supporting details that are logically linked
Conventions	**In the student's report:**			
– grammar, spelling, punctuation	– there are several major errors or omissions	– there are several minor errors or omissions	– there are only a few minor errors or omissions	– there are practically no errors or omissions
– visual presentation (e.g., indentations, spacing, margins, title)	– few aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– some aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– most aspects of the visual presentation are evident	– all aspects of the visual presentation are evident

Grade 5 Level 1: Example 1

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"

Roberto Alomar

Reberto Alomar is 30 years old. His birthday is Febuary 5 1968. He was born in portoricko.

I injoy Reberto Alomars occupation wicth is baseball. He is a Designated hitter. In 1997 Reberto Alomar hit a career .333.

His achifments are making it to the pro's. His dad and brother both play baseball.

I like baseball because when you hit the ball your team cheers you on.

I play baseball in Action for fun and we dont haft to stay in the same position.

I admire Reberto Alomar because I would like to go to the pros and hit a career .333.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes simple ideas that are often not connected to the topic
- provides limited detail to support ideas

Communication
- uses only simple sentences with limited detail
- the language and vocabulary used are simple

Organization
- the paragraph structure is limited; some paragraphs consist of only one sentence
- details are not connected

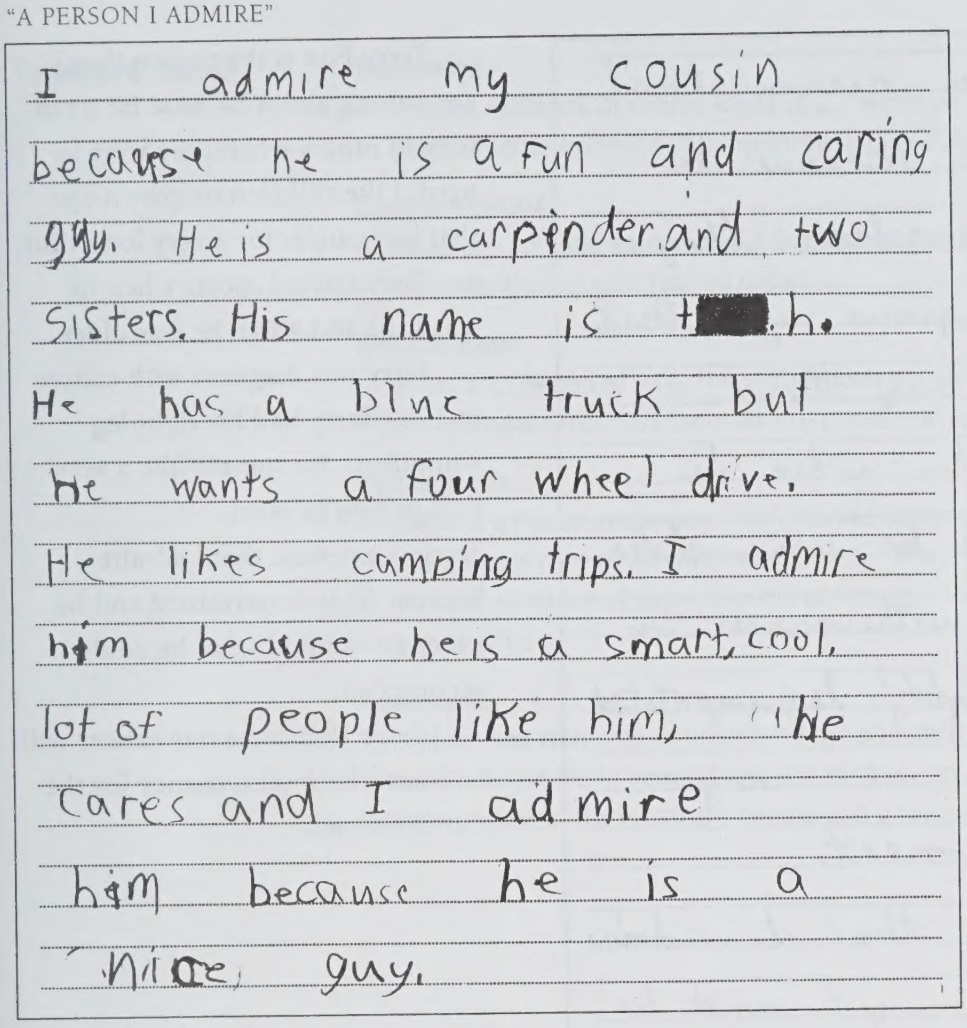
Conventions
- there is inconsistent use of capitals
- there are major spelling errors with common words (e.g., "haft to" for "have to")

Comments

This sample is a level 1 because the ideas, sentences, and vocabulary are too simple for Grade 5. There are ideas presented, but they are mostly unrelated facts that do not address why this person is admired.

Grade 5 Level 1: Example 2

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



I admire my cousin because he is a Fun and caring guy. He is a carpinder and, two sisters. His name is t___.h. He has a blue truck but he wants a four wheel drive. He likes camping trips. I admire him because he is a smart, cool, lot of people like him, he cares and I admire him because he is a nice guy.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- includes only simple ideas
- provides few supporting details
- the report is based on personal knowledge only

Communication
- the sentences used are simple (beginning with "I" or "he" in a repetitive way)
- the vocabulary used is simple and basic

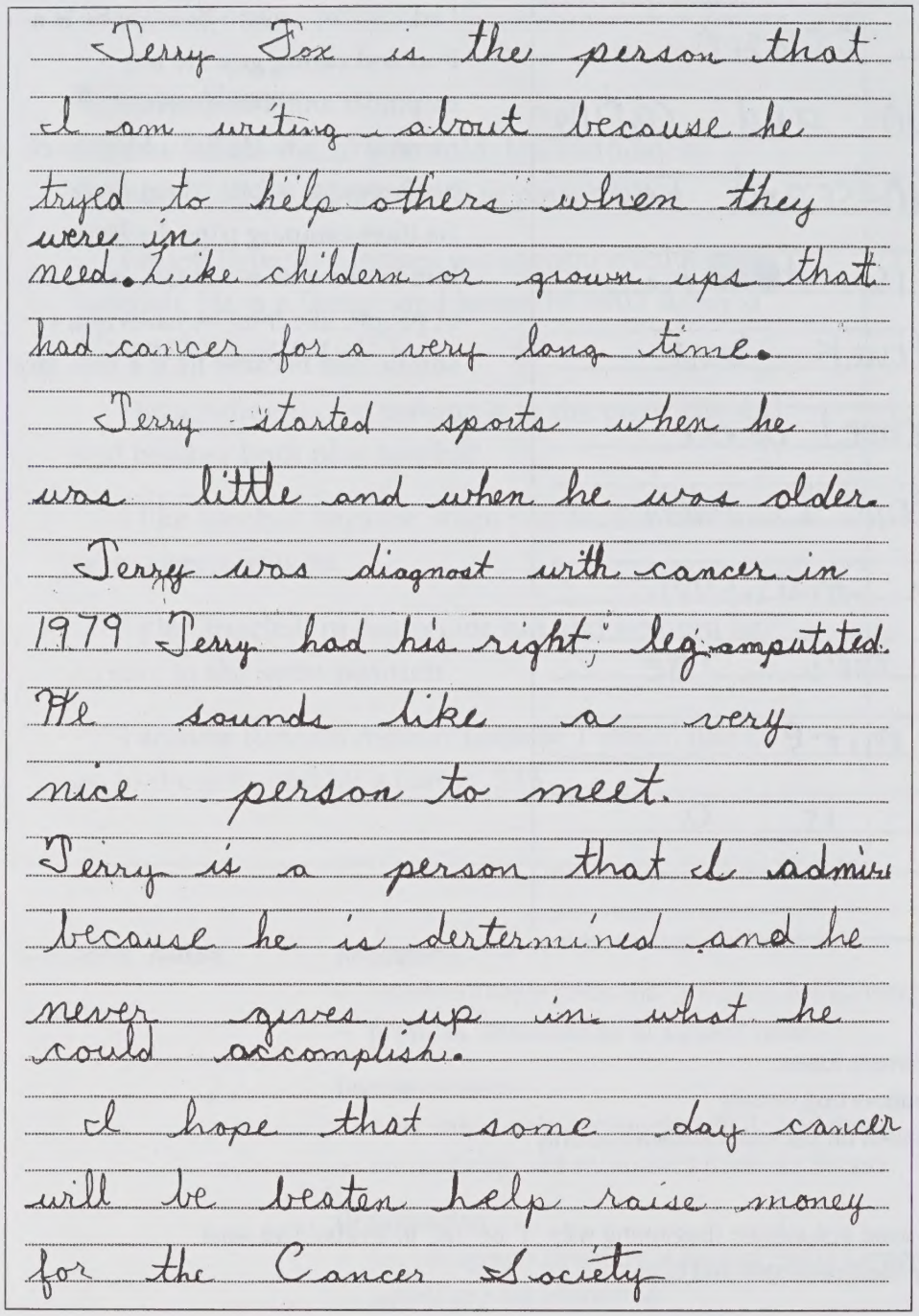
Organization
- the ideas are unconnected
- there is no paragraph structure

Conventions
- there is inconsistent use of capitals for proper nouns and many spelling errors

Comments
This piece of writing lacks a paragraph structure. Sentences and ideas are simple. There is a collection of sentences that are limited and do not always support the topic of why this person is admired.

Grade 5 Level 2: Example 1

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



Terry Fox is the person that I am writing about because he tryed to help others when they were in need. Like childern or grown ups that had cancer for a very long time.

Terry started sports when he was little and when he was older.

Terry was diagnost with cancer in 1979 Terry had his right leg amputated. He sounds like a very nice person to meet.

Terry is a person that I admire because he is dertermined and he never gives up in what he could accomplish.

I hope that some day cancer will be beaten help raise money for the Cancer Society

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- there is evidence of simple ideas (e.g., "when he was little and when he was older")
- there is some evidence of supporting details but not all ideas have been developed

Communication
- ideas are sometimes developed (e.g., when Terry's determination is discussed) but not consistently and with limited detail

Organization
- ideas are disjointed (e.g., the writer does not explain why Terry would be "nice to meet")
- some single sentences (sports) are presented as a paragraph

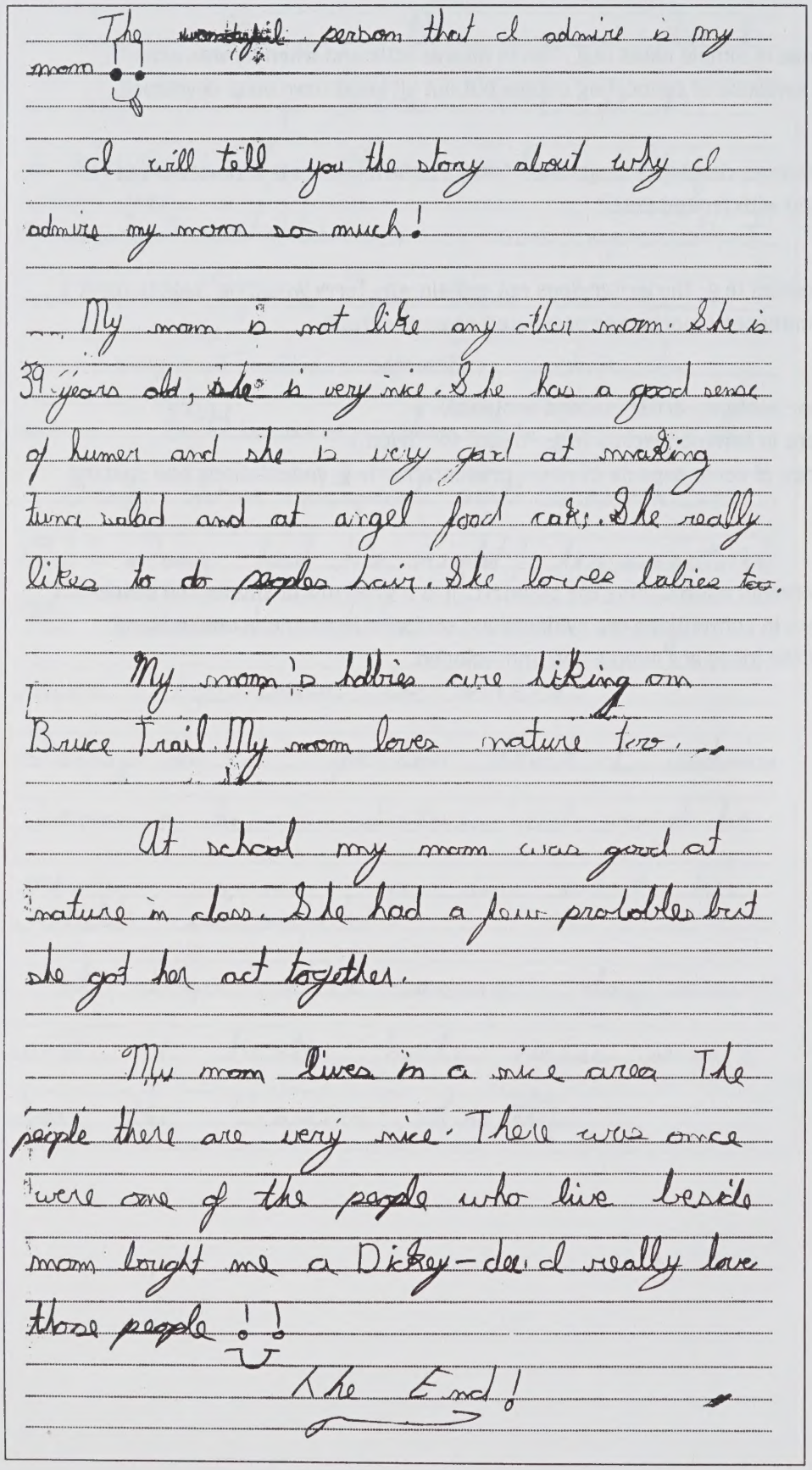
Conventions
- there is a minor sentence error (second sentence)
- there are errors in common words (e.g., "tryed" for "tried")
- there is evidence of some aspects of visual presentation (e.g., indentations and spacing, but no title)

Comments

This piece has elements approaching the standard. It is a good mix of simple and developed ideas. Some errors in conventions are evident (one sentence incomplete, one too long). However, most of the ideas are simple and undeveloped.

Grade 5 Level 2: Example 2

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



The wonderful person that I admire is my mom!!

I will tell you the story about why I admire my mom so much!

My mom is not like any other mom. She is 39 years old, she is very nice. She has a good sense of humer and she is very good at making tuna salad and at angel food cake. She really likes to do peoples hair. She loves babies too.

My mom's hobbies are hiking om Bruce Trail. My mom loves nature too.

At school my mom was good at nature in class. She had a few prolobles but she got her act together.

My mom lives in a nice area. The people there are very nice. There was omce were one of the people who live beside mom bought me a Dickey-dee. I really love those people!!

The End!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the ideas presented are mostly on topic, but some are solidly off-topic
- the report seems to be based only on personal knowledge

Communication
- there is some specific vocabulary used (e.g., "sense of humer" and "Bruce Trail")

Organization
- some attempt at paragraphs was made
- the conclusion is off-topic but somewhat connected

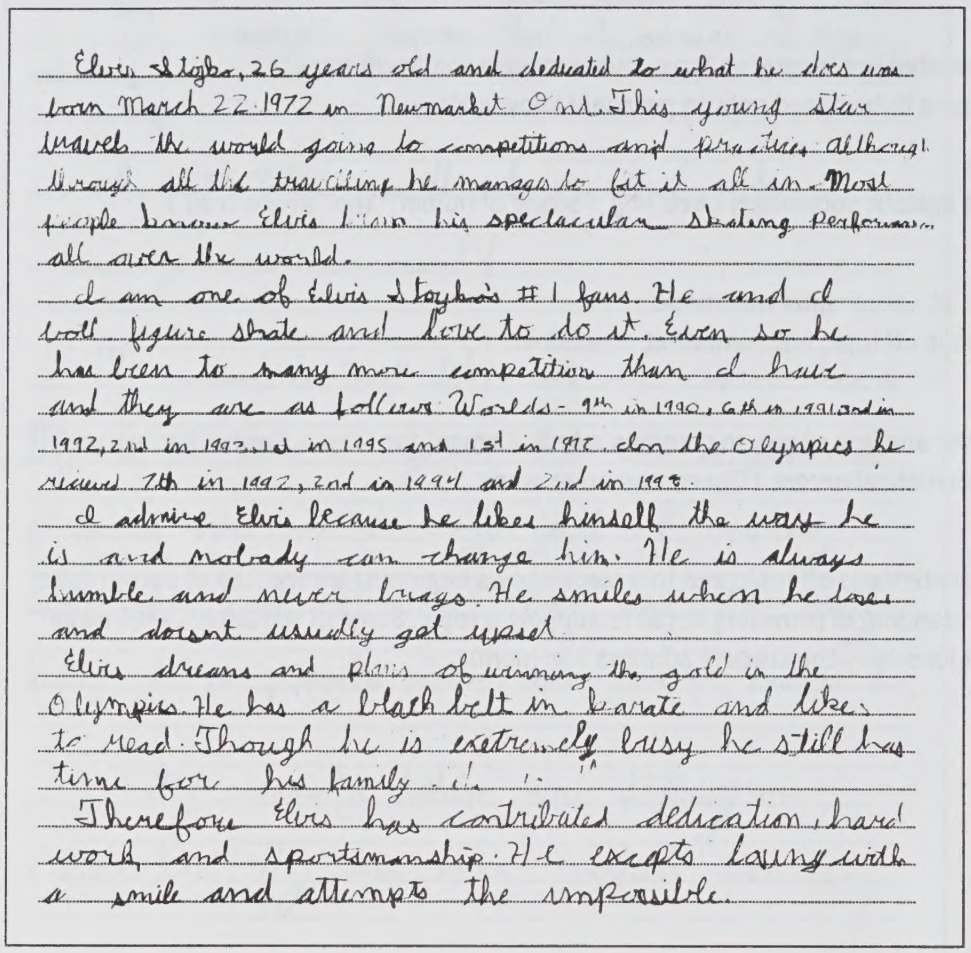
Conventions
- there are minor spelling errors in common words ("omce" for "once", "were" for "where")
- there are grammatical errors ("There was omce were ...")

Comments

The concluding sentence is off-topic, but this piece shows beginning awareness of paragraphs and some understanding of providing detail to support a topic. Some of the detail takes away from the central idea (why the student admires her mom).

Grade 5 Level 3: Example 1

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



Elvis Stojko, 26 years old and dedicated to what he does was born March 22. 1972 in Newmarket Ont. This young star travels the world going to competitions and practices although through all the travelling he manages to fit it all in. Most people know Elvis from his spectacular skating performances all over the world.

I am one of Elvis Stoyko's #1 fans. He and I both figure skate and love to do it. Even so he has been to many more competitions than I have and they are as follows: Worlds - 9th in 1990, 6th in 1991, 3rd in 1992, 2nd in 1993, 1st in 1995 and 1st in 1997. In the Olynpics he recieved 7th in 1992, 2nd in 1994 and 2nd in 1998.

I admire Elvis because he likes hinself the way he is and nobody can change him. He is always humble and never brags. He smiles when he loses and doesnt usually get upset.

Elvis dreans and plans of winning the gold in the Olympics. He has a black belt in karate and likes to read. Though he is exetremely busy he still has time for his family.

Therefore Elvis has contributed dedication, hard work, and sportsmanship. He excepts losing with a smile and attempts the impossible.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the ideas are developed and explain why Elvis is admired
- the flow of the report is logical
- the ideas give supportive detail and description

Communication
- the ideas and vocabulary reflect Grade 5 expectations (e.g., "practices", "competitions", "manages")
- a variety of sentence structure is used

Organization
- the report is organized into paragraphs, each of which is linked in general to its topic sentence
- the concluding paragraph is a good summary

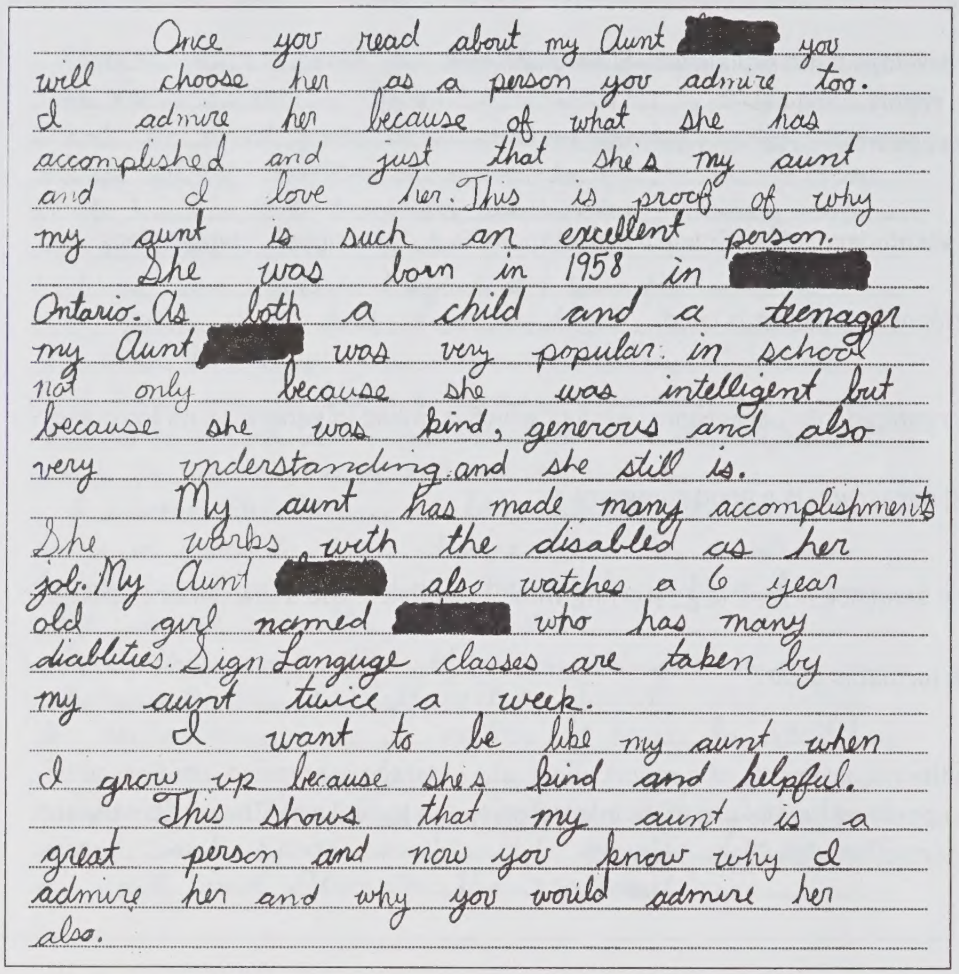
Conventions
- there are some sentence errors (e.g., starting with "Therefore") and a few minor spelling errors
- the paragraph format is clear

Comments

This piece meets the requirements of a report about why a person is admired. The person is introduced and supporting details are given in an orderly and logical way. The vocabulary and language use is consistent with Grade 5 writing.

Grade 5 Level 3: Example 2

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



Once you read about my Aunt [redacted] you will choose her as a person you admire too. I admire her because of what she has accomplished and just that she's my aunt and I love her. This is proof of why my aunt is such an excellent person.

She was born in 1958 in [redacted] Ontario. As both a child and a teenager my Aunt [redacted] was very popular in school not only because she was intelligent but because she was kind, generous and also very understanding and she still is.

My aunt has made many accomplishments. She works with the disabled as her job. My Aunt [redacted] also watches a 6 year old girl named [redacted] who has many diablities. Sign Languge classes are taken by my aunt twice a week.

I want to be like my aunt when I grow up because she's kind and helpful.

This shows that my aunt is a great person and now you know why I admire her and why you would admire her also.

Once you read about my Aunt L____ you will choose her as a person you admire too. I admire her because of what she has accomplished and just that she's my aunt and I love her. This is proof of why my aunt is such an excellent person.

She was born in 1958 in H_____ Ontario. As both a child and a teenager my Aunt L_____ was very popular in school not only because she was intelligent but because she was kind, generous and also very understanding and she still is.

My aunt has made many accomplishments. She works with the disabled as her job. My Aunt L____ also watches a 6 year old girl named A____ who has many diablities. Sign Language classes are taken by my aunt twice a week.

I want to be like my aunt when I grow up because she's kind and helpful.

This shows that my aunt is a great person and now you know why I admire her and why you would admire her also.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- presents a clear theme and supports it in a logical way
- demonstrates an understanding of the task, "Why this person is admired"

Communication
- the details support the topic to make the meaning clear
- the sentences have variety

Organization
- the beginning, middle, and end are evident and are linked
- the vocabulary is developed ("generous", "intelligent", "accomplishments")

Conventions
- the spelling, grammar, and punctuation are strong
- some sentences are too long (overuse of "and")

Comments

This piece of writing shows a good understanding of the task. The topic is presented and developed with details. The organization supports the topic.

Grade 5 Level 4: Example 1

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"

He was born on November 12, 1913 in Hamilton. His name is [redacted] and he is my Papa. Grandma met Papa when she was 10. They have known eachother for 73 years. Many people are famous and have more talents, but I chose to write about the most important person, in my life my Papa. I admire him because he was a good role model, talented wood worker and he taught me the importance of family.

My Papa was a good role model. My grandma told me he never got mad and he solved his problems in a peaceful way. According to my mom he saved her from getting bitten by a snapping turtle once. He calmly told her not to touch it and gently moved it out of harms way with a shovel. My Papa taught me how to be kind and patient.

My Papa is very talented with wood. He made me a crib for my dolls when I was two. My mom has three clocks he made. Also, he made me a teddy and my grandma painted it.

Finally, my Papa taught me the importance of family. Every year my grandparents had our whole family over for Christmas. These gatherings were his happiest times. One time I missed a visit and Papa was very dissapointed. As I get older family will always be important to me.

Papa very sadly passed away on April 2, 1997 1 day after my second cousin was born. Papa died at the [redacted] General Hospital. When I go to grandma's house I keep wishing he was there. I sure don't know what people think but in my opinion he was the greatest man in the whole world.

He was born on November 12, 1913 in Hamilton. His name is [redacted] and he is my Papa. Grandma met Papa when she was 10. They have known eachother for 73 years. Many people are famous and have more talents, but I chose to write about the most important person, in my life my Papa. I admire him because he was a good role model, talented wood worker and he taught me the importance of family.
My Papa was a good role model. My grandma told me he never got mad and he solved his problems in a peaceful way. According to my mom he saved her from getting bitten by a snapping turtle once. He calmly told her not to touch it and gently moved it out of harms way with a shovel. My Papa taught me how to be kind and patient.
My Papa is very talented with wood. He made me a crib for my dolls when I was two. My mom has three clocks he made. Also, he made me a teddy and my grandma painted it.
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Papa very sadly passed away on April 2, 1997 1 day after my second cousin was born. Papa died at the [redacted] General Hospital. When I go to grandma's house I keep wishing he was there. I sure don't know what people think but in my opinion he was the greatest man in the whole world.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the central ideas are well developed and well supported with relevant details
- the conclusion summarizes effectively
- the student has a thorough understanding of the topic

Communication
- the details engage the reader and help the reader understand why this person is admired
- the vocabulary used is strong ("according to", "talented", "importance of family")

Organization
- the writing is solidly organized to support the theme
- the paragraphs focus on single themes linked to the main theme established in the opening

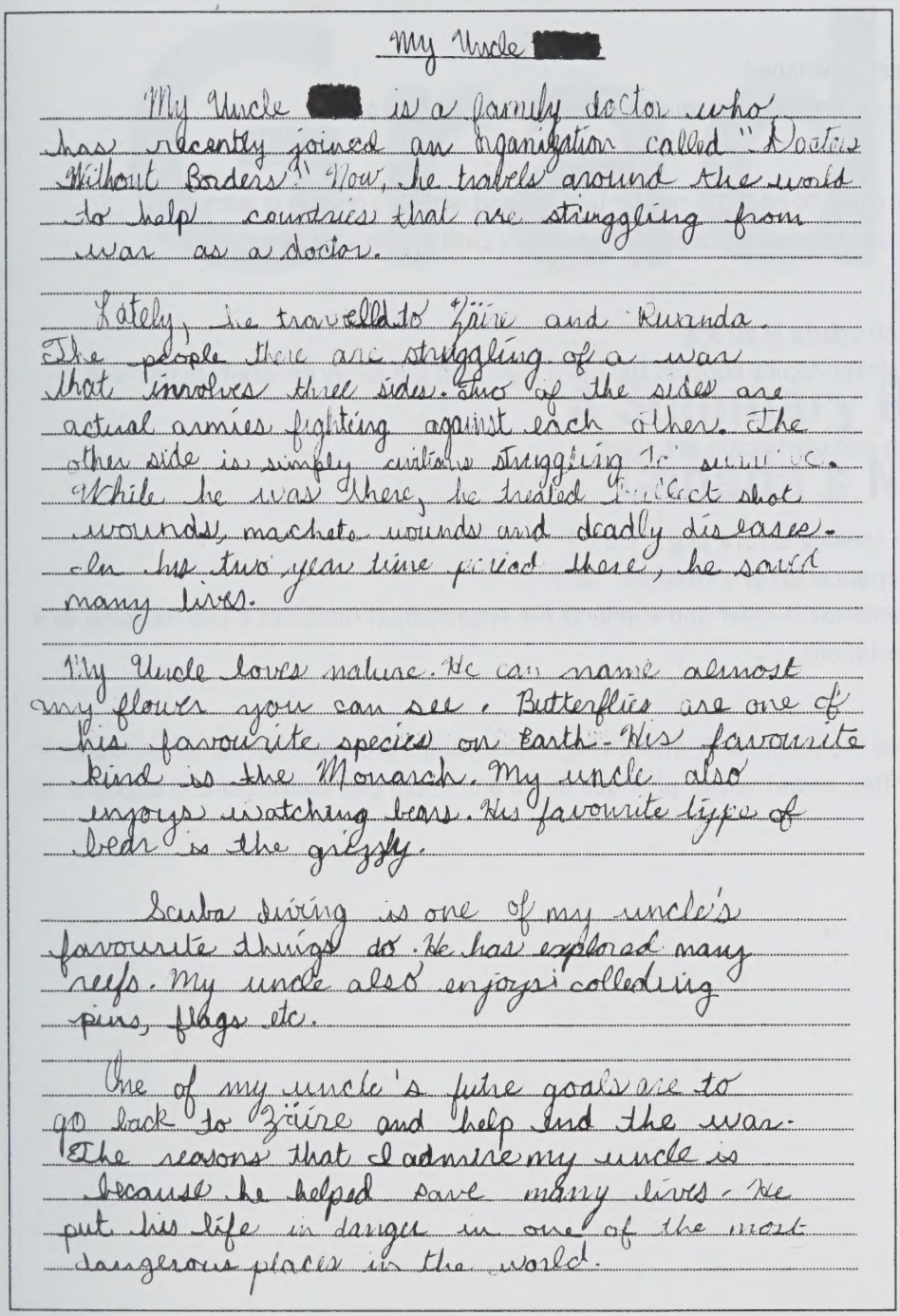
Conventions
- there are a few minor spelling errors (e.g., "dissapointed")
- there is some confusion with verb tense
- the visual presentation elements (e.g., indentation, spacing, margins) are effective

Comments

This topic is well developed. The organization, vocabulary, and details combine to present an effective piece of writing that is appealing and clear to the reader.

Grade 5 Level 4: Example 2

"A PERSON I ADMIRE"



My Uncle [redacted]

My Uncle [redacted] is a family doctor who has recently joined an Organization called "Doctors Without Borders." Now, he travels around the world to help countries that are stringgling from war as a doctor.

Lately, he travelld to Zäire and Rwanda. The people there are struggling of a war that involves three sides. Two of the sides are actual armies fighting against each other. The other side is simply civilians struggling to survive. While he was there, he treated bullect shot wounds, machete wounds and deadly diseases. In his two year time period there, he saved many lives.

My Uncle loves nature. He can name almost any flowers you can see. Butterflies are one of his favourite species on Earth. His favourite kind is the Monarch. My uncle also enjoys watching bears. His favourite type of bear is the grizzly.

Scuba diving is one of my uncle's favourite things do. He has explored many reefs. My uncle also enjoys collecting pins, flags etc.

One of my uncle's futre goals are to go back to Zäire and help end the war. The reasons that I admire my uncle is because he helped save many lives. He put his life in danger in one of the most dangerous places in the world.

My Uncle R__

My Uncle R__ is a family doctor who has recently joined an organization called "Doctors Without Borders." Now, he travels around the world to help countries that are struggling from war as a doctor.

Lately, he travelld to Zäire and Rwanda. The people there are struggling of a war that involves three sides. Two of the sides are actual armies fighting against each other. The other side is simply civilians struggling to survive. While he was there, he treated bullect shot wounds, machete wounds and deadly diseases. In his two year time period there, he saved many lives.

My Uncle loves nature. He can name almost any flower you can see. Butterflies are one of his favourite species on Earth. His favourite kind is the Monarch. My uncle also enjoys watching bears. His favourite type of bear is the grizzly.

Scuba diving is one of my uncle's favourite things do. He has explored many reefs. My uncle also enjoys collecting pins, flags etc.

One of my uncle's futre goals are to go back to Zäire and help end the war. The reasons that I admire my uncle is because he helped save many lives. He put his life in danger in one of the most dangerous places in the world.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the ideas are well-developed
- the writer shows a detailed, thorough understanding of the topic

Communication
- the writer uses detail to help the reader understand why this person is admired
- the vocabulary used has some depth (e.g., "simply civilians struggling to survive")

Organization
- the paragraph structure is strong
- not all the paragraph topics support the main topic, but the essay generally builds to a conclusion
- the introduction and conclusion are clear

Conventions
- there are some spelling errors (e.g., "futre")
- there is a grammatical error ("reasons ... is")
- the visual presentation is clear and supports the organization (includes a title, spacing, and paragraph indentation)

Comments

This writer develops the theme well, even though some topics provide information unrelated to the theme. The writing, nevertheless, provides depth and detail that convinces and engages the reader.

Grade 6

A Summary Report
("Canada's Newest Territory")

A Summary Report ("Canada's Newest Territory")

The Task

Students were asked to write a summary report of a non-fiction article entitled "Welcome Nunavut! Canada's Newest Territory". They were given a summary planner to record jot notes and to organize their thoughts, and were asked to use paragraph format and include information and details that were important for the reader to know. They were reminded to put all information into their own words. Students were also reminded to work with peer editors to check each other's work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes (to inform, to persuade, to explain) and to specific audiences (e.g., write the instructions for building an electrical circuit for an audience unfamiliar with the technical terminology);
- organize information to convey a central idea using well-linked paragraphs;
- use a variety of sentence types and structures (e.g., complex sentences) appropriate for their purposes;
- produce pieces of writing using a variety of forms and using materials from other media;
- revise and edit their work in collaboration with others, seeking and evaluating feedback, and focusing on content, organization, and the appropriateness of the vocabulary for the audience;
- proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, punctuation, spelling, and conventions of style;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation) specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 6 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 6, students will:

- accurately use appropriate organizers;
- use a dictionary and thesaurus to confirm their spelling.

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- using visual organizers when planning a summary
- process writing
- using a dictionary and a thesaurus for editing
- reading and writing non-fiction materials and reports
- writing introductions and conclusions
- recording jot notes on a topic and expanding jot notes to complete sentences and paragraphs in their own words
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting. Teachers used a summary planner similar to a web diagram, placing a topic (e.g., "Canada") in the centre and brainstorming subtopics (e.g., climate, geography, languages, population, customs) with the class to fill the squares or circles surrounding the main topic in the centre of the planner. Teachers recorded students' ideas in jot-form notes under each of the headings chosen. They then modelled how to expand the jot-form notes into complete sentences and paragraphs, emphasizing the need to explain the ideas in their words rather than simply copying the notes. Finally, they showed students how to write an introduction and a conclusion to complete their summary reports.

Drafting. Students read the selection on Nunavut and highlighted or underlined the key ideas included. They then completed the summary planner included in the student package and wrote first drafts of their summaries.

Revising. Teachers reviewed with their students the criteria for a summary report using a checklist included in the student package (or any similar alternative).

Editing. Teachers reviewed with students the criteria for revising and editing using the checklists provided in the student package (or any similar alternatives). Students revised or edited their own work and then worked in pairs to complete a peer revision or edit of their work before writing the final copy.

Publishing. Students wrote their final copies using resources such as computers, dictionaries, and thesauruses.

Reflecting. After finishing their final copies, students reflected on the process they had used by filling out the reflection sheets provided in their student packages.

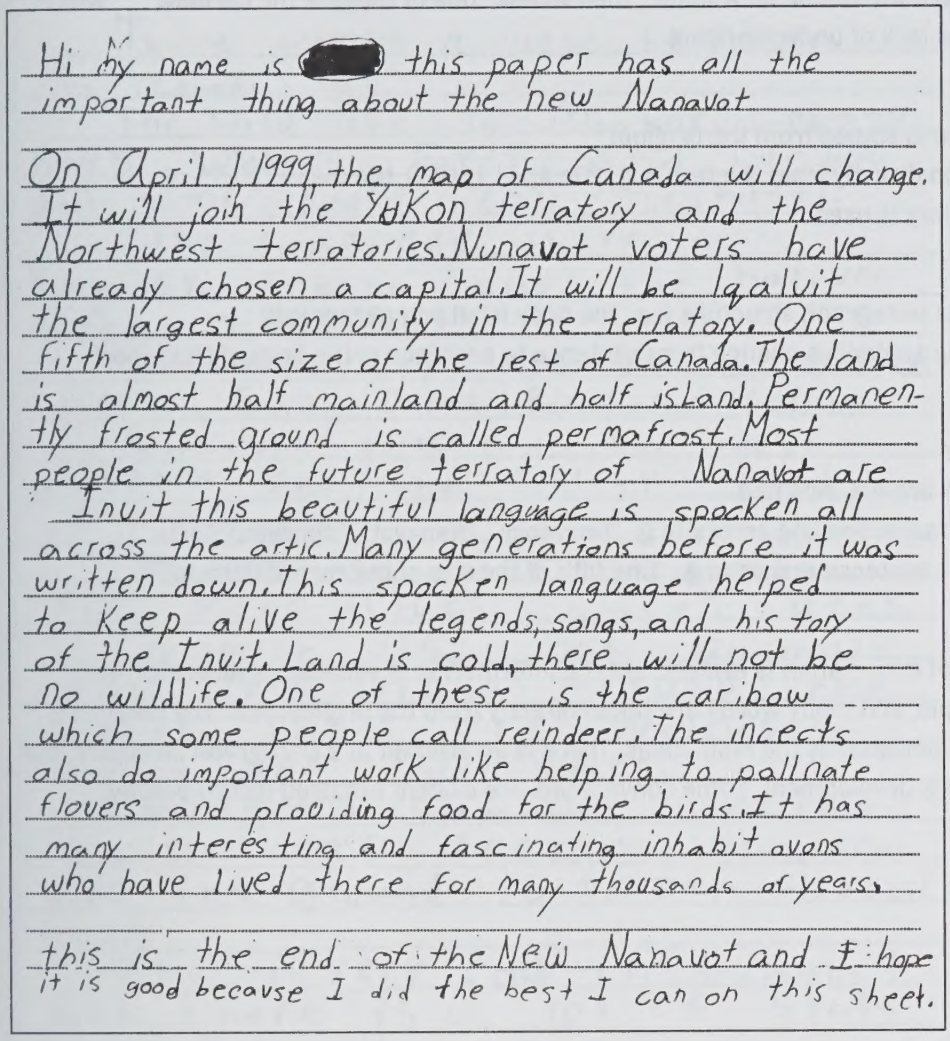
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 6: Rubric for a Summary Report

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	The student:			
– understanding of the main ideas	– shows limited understanding of the main ideas	– shows some understanding of the main ideas	– shows general understanding of the main ideas	– shows thorough understanding of the main ideas
– number and relevance of supporting facts and details	– retells few of the main ideas	– retells some of the main ideas, including supporting details	– summarizes most of the main ideas and includes supporting details	– summarizes and interprets all the main ideas and includes supporting details
Communication	The student's summary:			
– purpose: to summarize a report	– shows limited evidence of the purpose in the introduction	– communicates the purpose somewhat clearly in the introduction	– communicates the purpose clearly in the introduction	– communicates the purpose clearly in an effective and interesting introduction
– voice (use of the author's own words)	– contains words taken directly from the text	– contains some words from the text as well as the student's own words	– contains appropriate words from the text as well as the student's own words	– contains ideas expressed concisely in the student's own words, which expand on the concepts
– word use and vocabulary	– contains a limited vocabulary	– contains some variety of vocabulary	– contains a good variety of vocabulary	– contains an extensive vocabulary used correctly and effectively
– sentence variety (structure, type, length)	– has little sentence variety	– has some sentence variety	– has a good variety of sentences	– has an extensive variety of sentences used effectively
Organization	The student's summary:			
– overall structure (introduction, body, conclusion)	– is presented in a disorganized way	– shows some organization, including an introduction, body, and conclusion	– contains an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, with the conclusion linked to the introduction	– contains an introduction, a body, and a conclusion that are effectively linked to each other
– paragraph structure	– lacks a paragraph structure	– contains paragraphs that have some structure, but more than one topic may be combined within a paragraph	– contains paragraphs that have topic sentences and related details	– contains paragraphs that are well-developed, with clear topic sentences and relevant supporting details
Conventions	In the student's summary:			
– grammar, spelling, punctuation	– there are several major errors or omissions	– there are several minor errors or omissions	– there are only a few minor errors or omissions	– there are practically no errors or omissions
– visual presentation (e.g., indentations, spacing, margins, title)	– few aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– some aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– most aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– all aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident

Grade 6 Level 1: Example 1

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"



Hi My name is [redacted] this paper has all the important thing about the new Nanavot

On April 1 1999 the map of Canada will change. It will join the Yukon terratory and the Northwest terratories. Nunavot voters have already chosen a capital. It will be Iqaluit the largest community in the terratory. One fifth of the size of the rest of Canada. The land is almost half mainland and half isLand. Permanently frosted ground is called permafrost. Most people in the future terratory of Nanavot are Inuit this beautiful language is spocken all across the artic. Many generations before it was written down. this spocken language helped to keep alive the legends, songs, and his tory of the Inuit. Land is cold, there will not be no wildlife. One of these is the caribow which some people call reindeer. The incects also do important work like helping to pallnate flovers and providing food for the birds. It has many interesting and fascinating inhabit ovons who have lived there for many thousands of years.

this is the end of the New Nanavot and I hope it is good because I did the best I can on this sheet.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer retells some of the text message and a few of the main ideas
- there is limited understanding of the main idea and limited details
- states that "there will not be no wildlife", then writes "One of these is the caribow ...", which demonstrates a lack of understanding

Communication

- the introduction is copied from the original
- words are taken directly from the text (e.g., "On April 1, 1999, the map ...")
- limited vocabulary is used

Organization

- the report lacks paragraph structure (i.e., the body is all one paragraph)
- the topics of the sentences change from sentence to sentence in the body of the report

Conventions

- there is no title
- the paragraphs are not indented
- the report has major spelling errors (e.g., "terratory", "Nanavot", "spocken", "artic")
- there are major sentence errors (e.g., "One fifth of the size of the rest of Canada.")

Comments

A limited amount of information is evident, but the information is sometimes incorrect. The vocabulary is simple, and many words are taken directly from the original text. The ideas that are retold are not necessarily the main ideas. There is an attempt at a paragraph structure, but the paragraphs lack development. Some conventions are evident but used inconsistently.

Grade 6 Level 1: Example 2

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"

There will be a new territory in Canada.

The wild life is Maskox, Grizzy Bear's, Wolves, Foxes and Caribou but some people call Reindeer.

The language there is English French and the natives Speak Inuktitut.

Nuavut's bird's are the Snowowl, Geese, Swan, Ducks, Peregrine falcon.

Nuavut's climte is the most nothern and the Coldest part of Canada.

Nuavut's Summer Insects are Mosquitoes, wasps, Bees.

Nuavut also has animals that lives inand around the water. They are Walruses, Whales and Polar bears.

Nuavut's Summer weathe Still has icecaps, glaciers and the ground is frozen allyear round.

It's is very cold in Nunavut but there is a lot of stuff there for you!!

There will be a new territory in Canada.

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The language there is English French and the natives Speak Inuktitut.

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Nuavut's Summer weathe Still has icecaps, glaciers and the ground is frozen allyear round.

It's is very cold in Nunavut but there is a lot of stuff there for you!!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer focuses on some of the ideas but there are no main ideas (e.g., language, wildlife, culture, climate)
- limited detail is provided

Communication

- the writer uses limited vocabulary copied from the text
- the writer uses simple sentences that often begin with "Nuavut"

Organization

- the report lacks structure (the body is disorganized)
- there are single sentence paragraphs

Conventions

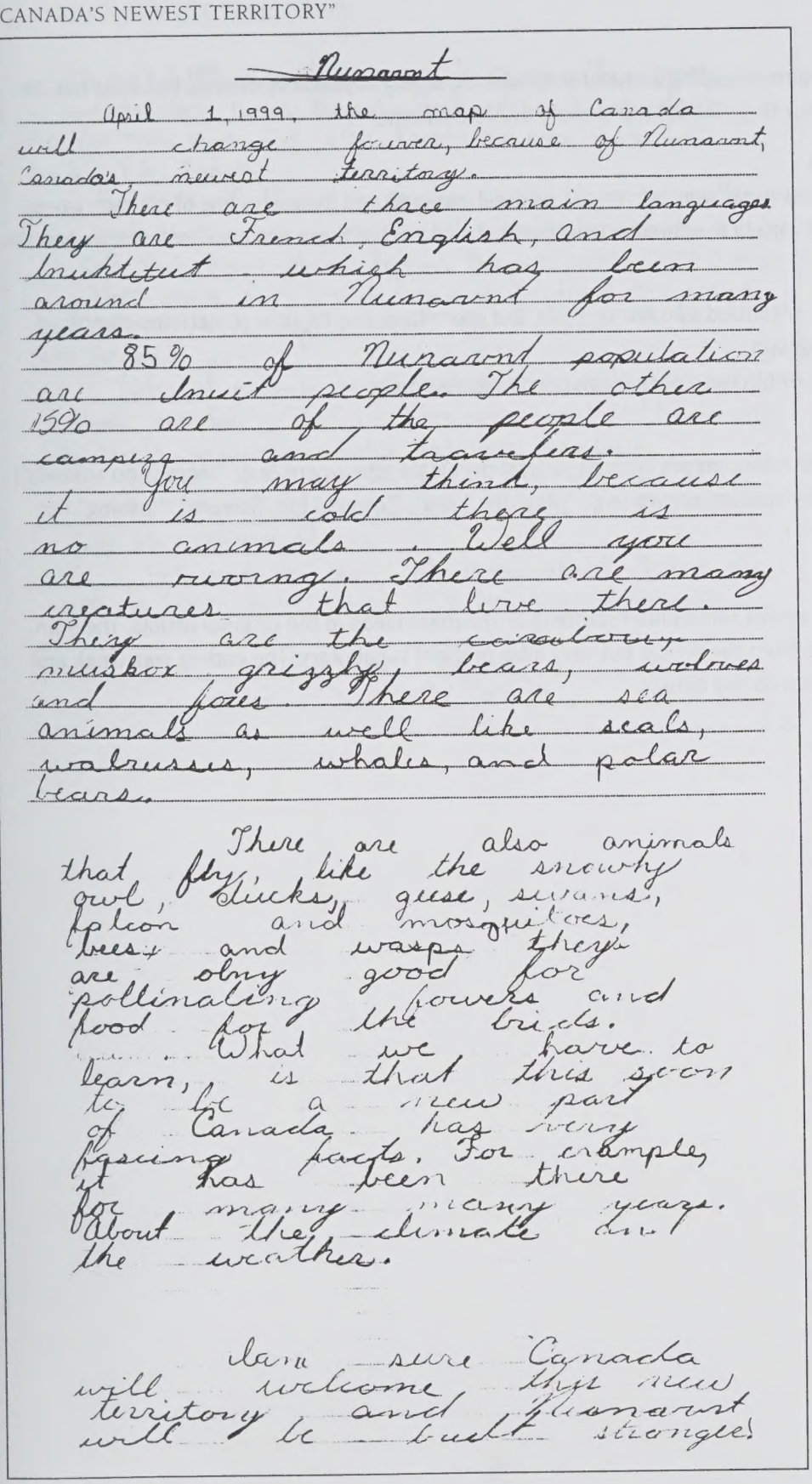
- there are major spelling errors ("bird's", "Nuavut", "weathe")
- there is good use of commas
- there is inconsistent use of capital letters
- there is no title
- sentences do not always make sense ("The language there is ...")

Comments

Many important and relevant details from the original text have been left out. Although the student has attempted to retell the information in his own words, only limited vocabulary and simple sentences are used. Paragraph concepts are developing but remain simple.

Grade 6 Level 2: Example 1

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"



Nunaavut

April 1, 1999, the map of Canada will change forever, because of Nunavut, Canada's newest territory.

There are three main languages They are French, English, and Inuktitut which has been around in Nunavut for many years.

85% of Nunavut population are Inuit people. The other 15% are of the people are campers and travelers.

You may think, because it is cold there is no animals. Well you are worng. There are many creatures that live there. They are the caribou, muskox, grizzly bears, wolves and foxes. There are sea animals as well like seals, walrusses, whales, and polar bears.

There are also animals that fly, like the snowhy owl, ducks, geese, swans, falcon and mosquitoes, bees and wasps they are olny good for pollinaling fowers and food for the brids.

What we have to learn, is that this soon to be a new part of Canada has very fascing facts. For crample, it has been there for many many years. About the climate and the weather.

Iam sure Canada will welcome this new territory and Nunavnt will be built stronger!

Nunavnt

April 1, 1999, the map of Canada will change forever, because of Nunavnt, Canada's newest territory.

There are three main languages. They are French, English, and Inuktitut which has been around in Nunavnt for many years.

85% of Nunavnt population are Inuit people. The other 15% are of the people are campers and travelers.

You may think, because it is cold there is no animals. Well you are worng. There are many creatures that live there. They are the caribou, muskox, grizzly bears, wolves and foxes. There are sea animals as well like seals, walrusses, whales, and polar bears.

There are also animals that fly, like the snowhy owl, ducks, geese, swans, falcon and mosquitoes, bees and wasps they are olny good for pollinaling fowers and food for the brids.

What we have to learn, is that this soon to be a new part of Canada has very fascing facts. For example, it has been there for many many years. About the climate and the weather.

Iam sure Canada will welcome this new territory and Nunavnt will be built stronger!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer begins including some of the main ideas and supporting details, but does not do this throughout (e.g., "About the climate and the weather.")

Communication

- the writer takes most words from the original passage and uses very few of his own words
- there is some variety in sentence length and structure, but there are also sentence fragments

Organization

- the writing is organized into paragraphs, but more than one topic is sometimes combined within a paragraph
- the structure within each paragraph needs improvement

Conventions

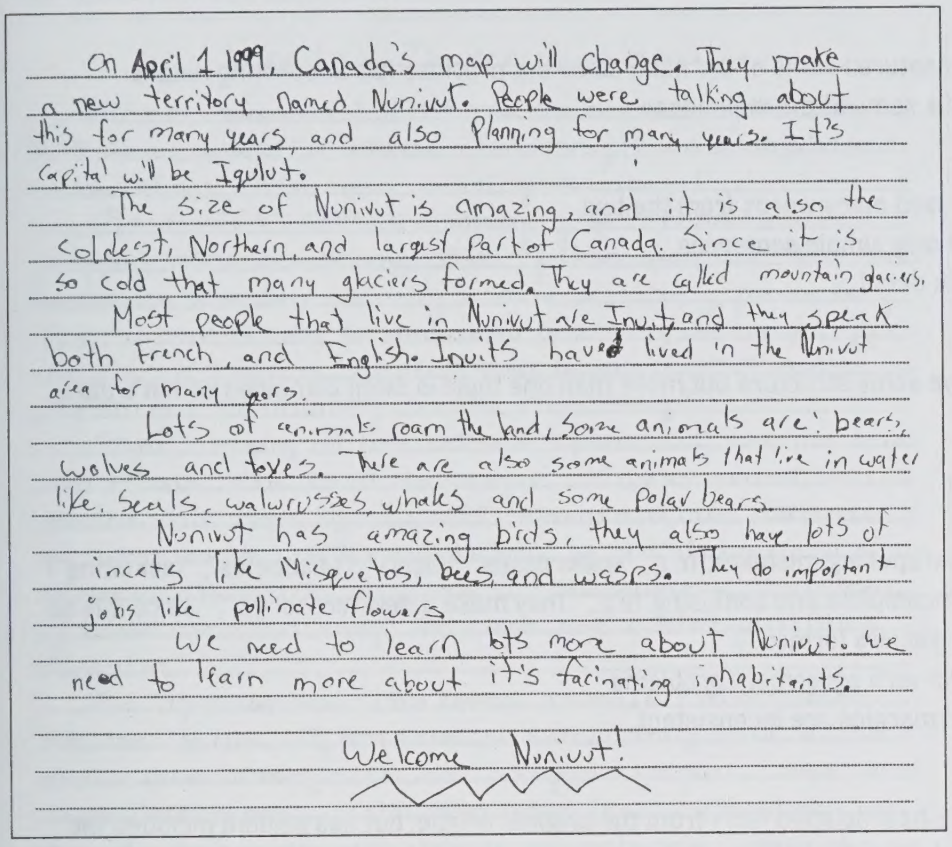
- there are some minor errors such as subject-predicate agreement (e.g., "there is no animals")
- there are many spelling errors (e.g., "olny" for "only", "fowers" for "flowers", "fascing" for "fascinating")

Comments

The student has shown some understanding of the main ideas in the original article. The summary uses words from the article but very little original vocabulary. The ending was weak and the report included no key details.

Grade 6 Level 2: Example 2

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"



On April 1 1999, Canada's map will change. They make a new territory named Nunivut. People were talking about this for many years and also Planning for many years. It's Capital will be Iqulut.

The size of Nunivut is amazing, and it is also the coldest, Northern, and largest part of Canada. Since it is so cold that many glaciers formed. They are called mountain glaciers.

Most people that live in Nunivut are Inuit, and they speak both French, and English. Inuits have lived in the Nunivut area for many years.

Lots of animals roam the land, some animals are: bears, wolves and foxes. There are also some animals that live in water like. Seals, walwrusses, whales and some polar bears.

Nunivut has amazing birds, they also have lots of incets like Misquetos, bees, and wasps. They do important jobs like pollinate flowers.

We need to learn lots more about Nunivut. We need to learn more about it's facinating inhabitants.

Welcome Nunivut!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer has captured some of the main ideas but provides few supporting details
- the writer retells some of the main ideas

Communication

- the writer has used many words from the text
- the writer uses only simple sentences
- paragraphs lack detail

Organization

- paragraphs have some structure but more than one topic is often combined within a paragraph

Conventions

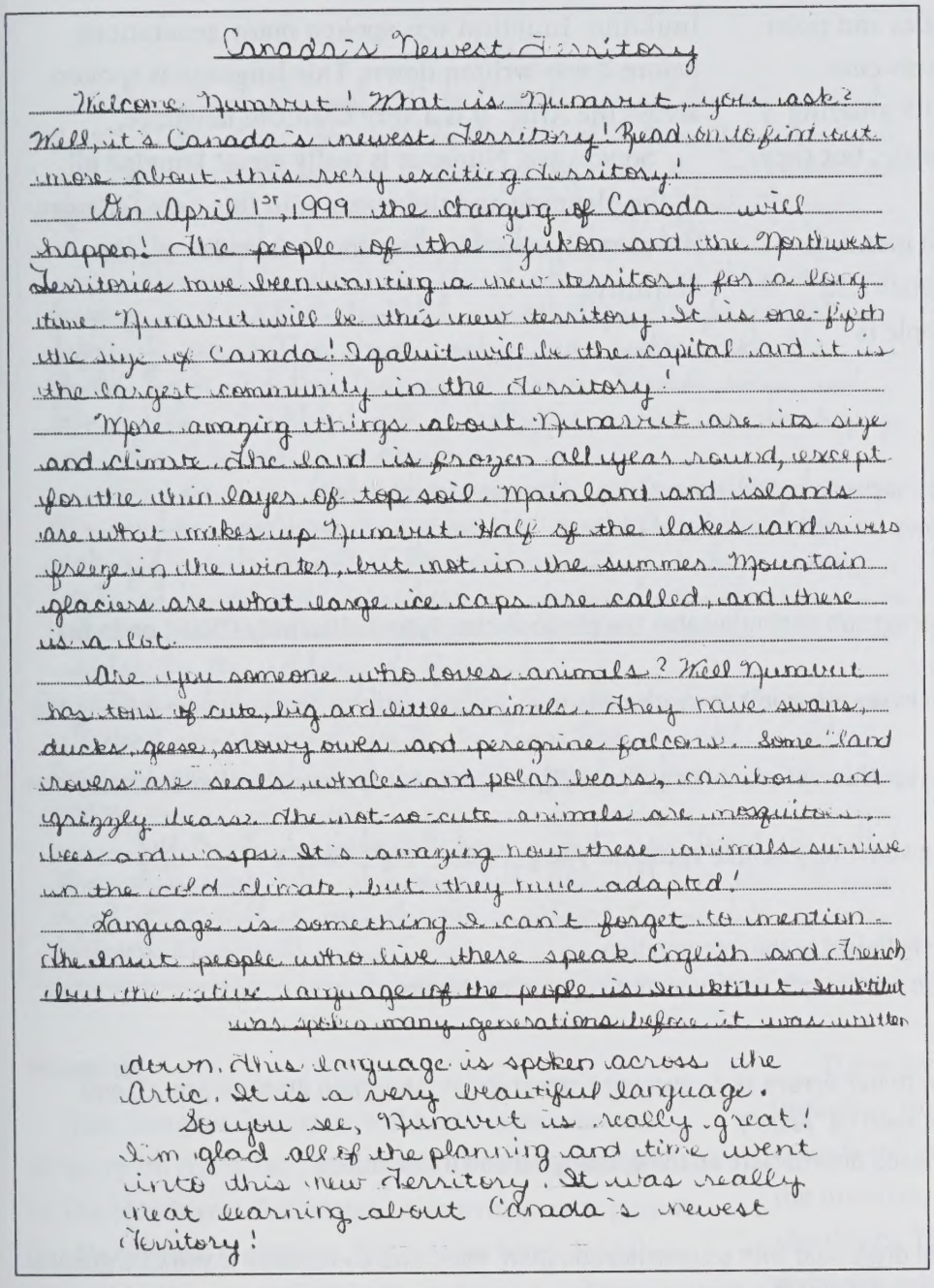
- there is no title
- there are several spelling mistakes, (e.g., "walwrusses", "incets", "Misquetos", "facinating")
- sentences are incomplete and confusing (e.g., "They make a new territory ...", "Since it is so cold that many glaciers formed.")
- there are subject-verb agreement problems
- the spacing and margins are inconsistent

Comments

This writing sample has included facts from the original article, but has seldom included the student's own words. There are several minor errors with conventions and sentence structure.

Grade 6 Level 3: Example 1

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"



Canada's Newest Territory

Welcome Nunavut! What is Nunavut, you ask? Well, it's Canada's newest Territory! Read on to find out more about this very exciting Territory!

On April 1st, 1999 the changing of Canada will happen! The people of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories have been wanting a new territory for a long time. Nunavut will be this new territory. It is one-fifth the size of Canada! Iqaluit will be the capital and it is the largest community in the Territory!

More amazing things about Nunavut are its size and climate. The land is frozen all years round, except for the thin layer of top soil. Mainland and islands are what makes up Nunavut. Half of the lakes and rivers freeze in the winter, but not in the summer. Mountain glaciers are what large ice caps are called, and there is a lot.

Are you someone who loves animals? Well Nunavut has tons of cute, big and little animals. They have swans, ducks, geese, snowy owls and peregrine falcons. Some "land rovers" are seals, whales and polar bears, caribou and grizzly bears. The not-so-cute animals are mosquitoes, bees and wasps. It's amazing how these animals survive in the cold climate, but they have adapted!

Language is something I can't forget to mention. The Inuit people who live there speak English and French but the native language of the people is Inuktitut. Inuktitut was spoken many generations before it was written down. This language is spoken across the Artic. It is a very beautiful language.

So you see, Nunavut is really great! I'm glad all of the planning and time went into this new Territory. It was really neat learning about Canada's newest Territory!

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer summarizes the text's main ideas with supporting details
- the report shows an understanding of the text

Communication
- the opening paragraph communicates the purpose clearly and effectively ("Read on to find out ...")
- the writer expresses ideas in her own words (e.g., asks questions, gives opinion, talks to the reader)
- there is some repetition of words (e.g., "really"), and structures (overuse of exclamatory sentences)
- the writer uses some very simple vocabulary (e.g., "cute", "big", "little")

Organization
- the conclusion is linked to the introduction
- each paragraph has a topic sentence and supporting details

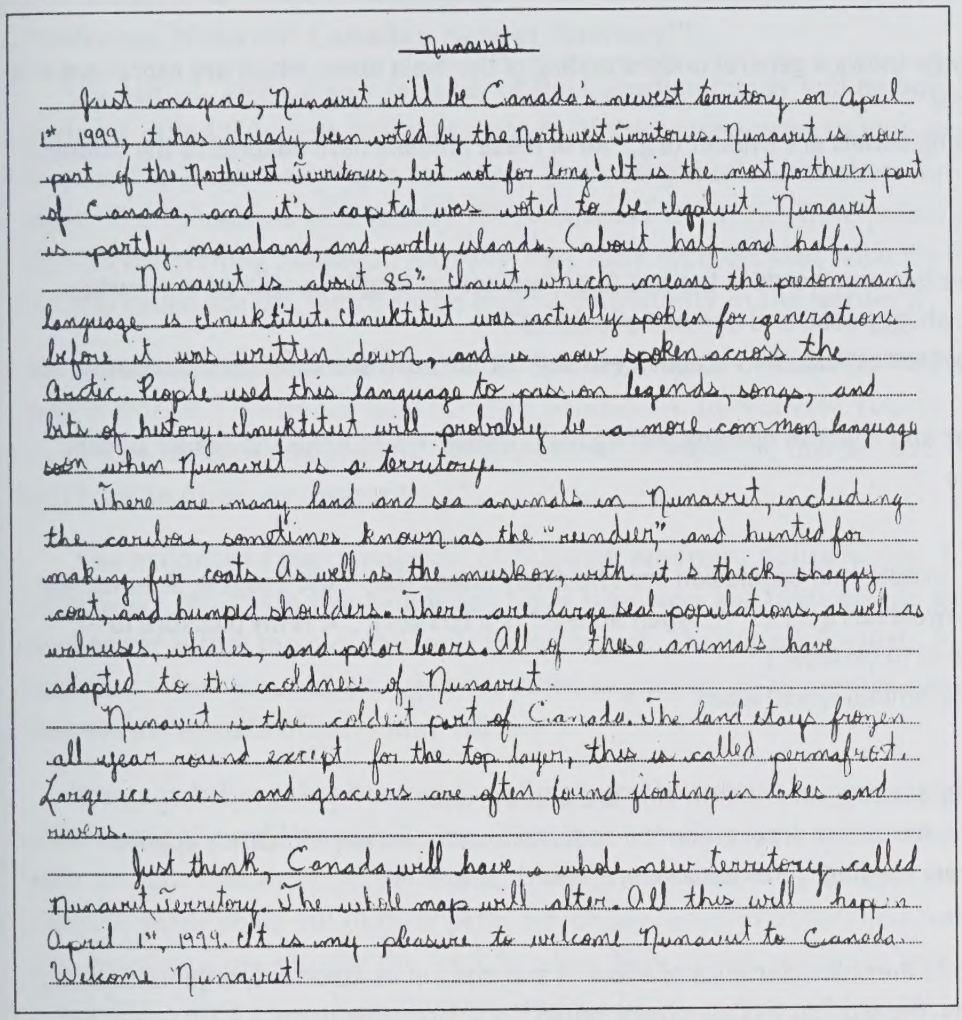
Conventions
- there are a few minor errors (e.g., awkward structure in "Mountain glaciers are ...", and spelling errors such as "Artic")
- the writer has used appropriate spacing, margins, and indentations

Comments

This writing is well organized with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion. It shows a general understanding of the article. The student used her own words and offered her opinion in several instances. Grade 6 conventions were used successfully.

Grade 6 Level 3: Example 2

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"



Nunavut

Just imagine, Nunavut will be Canada's newest territory on April 1st 1999, it has already been voted by the Northwest Territories. Nunavut is now part of the Northwest Territories, but not for long! It is the most Northern part of Canada, and it's capital was voted to be Iqaluit. Nunavut is partly mainland, and partly islands, (about half and half.)

Nunavut is about 85% Inuit, which means the predominant language is Inuktitut. Inuktitut was actually spoken for generations before it was written down, and is now spoken across the Arctic. People used this language to pass on legends, songs, and bits of history. Inuktitut will probably be a more common language soon when Nunavut is a territory.

There are many land and sea animals in Nunavut, including the caribou, sometimes known as the "reindeer," and hunted for making fur coats. As well as the muskox, with it's thick, shaggy coat, and humped shoulders. There are large seal populations, as well as walruses, whales, and polar bears. All of these animals have adapted to the coldness of Nunavut.

Nunavut is the coldest part of Canada. The land stays frozen all year round except for the top layer, this is called permafrost. Large ice caps and glaciers are often found floating in lakes and rivers.

Just think, Canada will have a whole new territory called Nunavut Territory. The whole map will alter. All this will happen April 1st, 1999. It is my pleasure to welcome Nunavut to Canada. Welcome Nunavut!

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the text message shows a general understanding of the main ideas, which are expressed in a concise manner
- some supporting details are evident (e.g., "All of these animals have adapted to the coldness of Nunavut.")

Communication

- the writer uses her own words in the text (e.g., "but not for long", "as well as the muskox with it's thick, shaggy coat, and humped shoulders")
- the writer reorganizes text and vocabulary to suit the purpose and combines ideas in varied sentences
- there is a clear and effective opening stating the purpose, which helps the reader understand the topic

Organization

- the beginning, middle, and conclusion are effectively linked (i.e., "Just imagine, Nunavut will be Canada's newest territory ...", "... when Nunavut is a territory", "It is my pleasure to welcome Nunavut to Canada.")
- the paragraphs contain linked ideas

Conventions

- the paragraphs, spacing, and handwriting are appropriate
- there are only a few minor errors, and the conventions studied are effectively applied (i.e., punctuation, spelling, generalizations, and verb tense)

Comments

This writing exhibits the characteristics of a level 3 summary in its structure, organization, and use of conventions. The student has effectively retold the information using a good mix of her own words and vocabulary from the article.

Grade 6 Level 4: Example 1

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"

"Welcome, Nunavut! Canada's Newest Territory!"

On April 1, 1999, a new member of the Canadian family will be born! A new territory, called Nunavut, will join Canada. If this is new news to you, you will be very surprised to learn that people have been discussing this new territory for a number of years. The Canadians who inhabit the Northwest Territories have polled twice to make choices concerning Nunavut. Actually, they have even decided what their capital will be. It is called Iqaluit, which is the biggest community in the territory.

Nunavut is in the coldest and most northern region of Canada. The majority of it's land is frozen. This frozen land is called permafrost. In Nunavut you can also observe numerous ice caps and glaciers. As you can tell, the people that are to live in Nunavut will have to dress very warmly.

The majority of the population of Nunavut are Inuit. Actually, near 85% of the citizens are Inuit. Are you wondering what languages the Inuit people speak? Actually, the answer is that most of the Inuit are trilingual. They speak English, French, and Inuktitut. This vernacular tongue has aided in passing on the myths, dancesand songs that are the records of early Inuit history.

You may believe that because the climate in Nunavut is so exceedingly cold, no creatures in the wild would survive. That is not so. The land in Nunavut is abundant with animals that thrive in the harsh environment. One such being is the caribou. Humans make coats out of their pelts, which are recognized for their warm insulation. Groups of muskox wander the land. Muskox have dense, rough fur and broad, humped shoulders. Other animals in Nunavut include foxes, wolves, and grizzly bears. Nunavut is also home to an immense seal settlement, and also walruses, whales, and polar bears.

Nunavut is also a habitat to a number of astonishing birds, like ducks, geese, swans, peregrine falcons, and snowy owls. But don't forget those pesty insects! The cold does not stop them! Even bees, wasps, and (of course) mosquitoes make their appearance in Nunavut!

We all still have many thing to fathom when it comes to Nunavut. In time we will come to understand it, though never completely. *Welcome, Nunavut! Canada's newest territory!*

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer captures all the main messages and provides supporting details
- all key concepts (e.g., climate, population) are included and summarized

Communication

- the writing engages the reader immediately – from the initial sentence
- the writer expresses key concepts in an interesting way using his own words
- the writer uses descriptive vocabulary that goes well beyond the original text (e.g., "trilingual" "vernacular")
- sentences have variety in length, style, and structure, which makes this report interesting to read

Organization

- there is a high degree of organization (contains an introduction, a body, and a conclusion)
- the topic sentences and supporting details are very effective
- there is a solid paragraph structure

Conventions

- there is effective use of title, paragraphs, and punctuation
- the writer has used brackets and italics
- there are practically no errors (e.g., "thing" for "things", "it's" for "its")

Comments

This writer clearly summarizes the most important information on Nunavut in a non-fiction report. The information from the article has been reworded and expanded on. The vocabulary has some sophistication and is accurate. The student's voice is evident, as the writer is clearly appealing to the reader.

Grade 6 Level 4: Example 2

"CANADA'S NEWEST TERRITORY"

"Nunavut"

Move over Northwest Territories, we need room for Canada's newest territory, Nunavut. On April 1st, 1999 Nunavut will be joining our list of Canadian territories. Finally after many years of decision making, it was decided that Nunavut would become it's own territory. It was also decided that Iqaluit would be Nunavut's capital city, since it was the largest community in the area. Nunavut would finally become one of Canada's territories.

As well as being the newest addition to Canada's map, Nunavut has many interesting facts about itself. Nunavut is the coldest and farthest north part of Canada. It is also very large, measuring about 1/5 of the rest of Canada. In this enormus territory, about half of it is mainland and the other half are islands. Most of the land, except the top layer of the earth, is frozen all year long. This is called permafrost. Even though part of the land is frozen all year round, the lakes and rivers are not. Just like any other part of Canada, Nunavut's rivers and lakes only freeze in winter and once again flow in summer. There are also very large glaciers in Nunavut. They are called "mountain glaciers." Nunavut has small glaciers too, but the larger ones are far more interesting.

Most of the people who live in Nunavut are Inuit. Infact, 85% of the population is Inuit. Some of the languages spoken in Nunavut are French and English, but the most common language is Inuktitut. It has been spoken for thousands of years by the Inuits. During these thousands of years, Inuktitut has been able to tell stories, legends etc. better than English or French ever could.

Nunavut also has many interesting mammals living there. Some of these mammals are caribou, muskox, grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, seals, walruses, whales and polar bears. All of these animals can survive in the coldest winters because of their thick coats of fur or their large amounts of fat. Also, Nunavut is not unbearablely cold all year round and the animals aren't fighting the cold for 365 days. The animals of Nunavut are probably the most fascinating creatures in all of Canada.

In Nunavut there are many beautiful birds of many shapes and sizes. Some of the most common kinds of birds in Nunavut are: the snowy owl, many species of ducks, geese, swans and the percegrine falcon. There are many birds, but there are also many insects such as mosquitoes, wasps and bees. They are very annoying, but they also pollinate flowers an provide food for the many beautiful birds.

Nunavut will surely be a wonderful new territory.

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Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer understands key concepts such as the importance of a new territory and the influence of the climate
- all key ideas have been captured and summarized

Communication
- the introduction is effective and catchy
- the writer uses the information from the text but then expands on it (e.g., insects are annoying but also pollinate the plants)
- the writer uses complex words (e.g., "decision making") and a variety of sentence structures

Organization
- each paragraph has an opening and closing sentence that introduce and summarize its ideas
- the paragraph structure is solid

Conventions
- the report is well presented with a title and paragraphs
- effective use of commas is made to provide a flow similar to effective speech
- the colon is used correctly
- there are practically no errors

Comments

This writer clearly understands the task. The second paragraph is long, but overall the vocabulary, the development of the paragraphs, and the effectiveness of this summary place it as a level 4.

Grade 7

An Advertisement (for a New Food Product)

An Advertisement (for a New Food Product)

The Task

Students were asked to write an advertisement for a food magazine describing a new and exciting food product. The advertisement was intended to persuade a specific group of consumers/readers of the value of this product. Students were to use an essay format and to follow the writing process described on pages 6 and 11 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*. Students were also reminded to check their work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes and to specific audiences;
- organize information to develop a central idea, using well-linked and well-developed paragraphs;
- use a variety of sentence types and sentence structures, and sentences of varying length;
- produce pieces of writing using a variety of specific forms, techniques, and resources appropriate to the form and purpose, and materials from other media;
- revise and edit their work, focusing on content and elements of style;
- proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, punctuation, spelling, and conventions of style;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation) specified for this grade.

During this task, students worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 7 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 7, students will:

- use modifiers correctly and with increasing effectiveness;
- give evidence of an expanding vocabulary in their writing;
- show a growing awareness of the expressiveness of words in their word choice.

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- working with adjectives, adverbs, verbs, and nouns so that they fully understand the function of each
- writing descriptive paragraphs in the context of other subject areas (e.g., science, math, history)
- process writing
- using a dictionary and a thesaurus
- discussing descriptive language used in effective print and radio advertisements
- using literary devices in descriptive writing
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific chart like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting, Part 1. Students were asked to pretend that they had been hired by a food manufacturer to design a new food product for a specific group of consumers. They brainstormed together to come up with adjectives relating to taste, smell, appearance, and texture.

Prewriting, Part 2. Using advertisements, recipe books, newspapers, magazines, and so on, students were asked to collect and identify descriptive phrases, as well as to identify and discuss examples of literary devices such as onomatopoeia, simile, and metaphor. These were retained for future reference in students' notes or by classroom posting.

Prewriting, Part 3. Teachers prepared cards that each contained the name of a specific consumer group (e.g., athletes, seniors, teens, children, busy adults) and, with students working in groups, distributed one card to each group. Using the planning guide entitled "That Great Food" in the student package to organize their discussion, students brainstormed a type of food that would be appropriate or appealing to that consumer group. Each group brainstormed possible names for the food product selected, chose one, and then decided on the product's packaging and illustrated it.

Prewriting, Part 4. Each group of students wrote a poem, slogan, or song to describe their food product and presented it orally to the class, using illustration to reinforce the message. The class then discussed the effective words and phrases used by each group to describe their products.

Drafting. Students wrote the first drafts of their articles.

Revising. Teachers reviewed with their students the criteria for descriptive or persuasive writing using the checklist included in the student package (or any similar alternative). Students then revised their work accordingly.

Editing. Students edited their own work and then worked in pairs to complete a peer edit of their work (using the guideline in the student package) before writing their final copies.

Publishing. Students revised their compositions using the suggestions from their peer editors and wrote their final copies using resources such as computers, dictionaries, and thesauruses.

Reflecting. Students reflected on the process they had used by filling out the reflection sheets provided in their student packages.

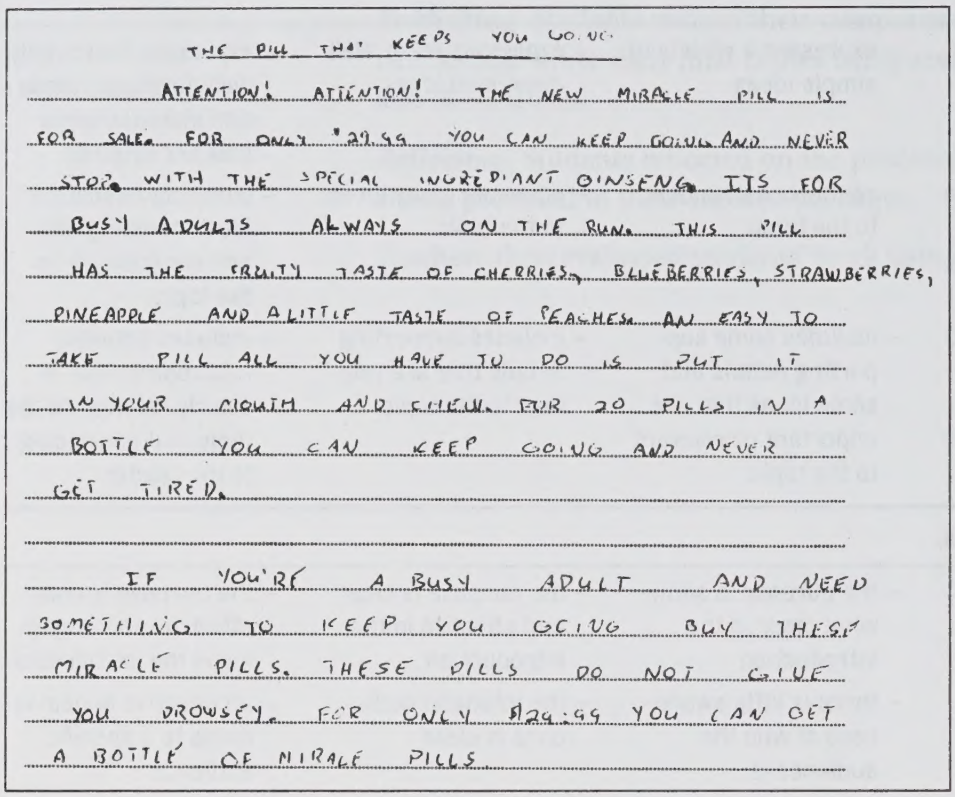
Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 7: Rubric for an Advertisement (for a New Food Product)

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas	– expresses only a few simple ideas	– expresses a variety of simple ideas	– expresses many well-developed ideas	– expresses thoroughly well-developed ideas and includes some that are original
– connecting ideas to the topic	– connects few ideas to the topic	– connects some ideas to the topic	– connects many ideas to the topic	– connects almost all ideas meaningfully and consistently to the topic
– number and relevance of supporting details	– includes few supporting details and some ideas that are not important or relevant to the topic	– includes some supporting details and some ideas that are important or relevant to the topic	– includes supporting details that are relevant to the topic	– includes detailed information that is clearly relevant to the topic and convincing to the reader
Communication	**In the student's article:**			
– purpose (to create a descriptive, persuasive article)	– the purpose is unclear in the introduction	– the purpose is somewhat clear in the introduction	– the purpose is clear and effective in the introduction	– the purpose is clear, effective, and engaging in the introduction
– voice (awareness of audience)	– there is no evidence of who the audience is	– there is little awareness of who the audience is	– the intended audience is clear	– an effective appeal is made to a specific audience
– word use and vocabulary	– the vocabulary is not effective	– there is some effective vocabulary	– much of the vocabulary is used effectively	– almost all the words are used effectively
– sentence variety (structure, type, length)	– there is little sentence variety	– there is some variety in the sentences used	– a variety of sentences are used	– a variety of sentences are used effectively
– use of literary devices	– literary devices are not used	– there is little use of literary devices	– some literary devices are used	– a number of literary devices have been used effectively
Organization	**The student's article:**			
– overall structure (introduction, body, conclusion)	– has no clear overall structure	– shows some evidence of an introduction, body, and conclusion	– the introduction, body, and conclusion are organized to develop a central idea	– the introduction, body, and conclusion are clear and effective
– paragraph structure	– contains little division into paragraphs	– contains simple paragraphs	– contains well-developed paragraphs	– contains well-developed paragraphs that are closely linked to each other
Conventions	**In the student's article:**			
– grammar, spelling, and punctuation	– there are several major errors or omissions	– there are several minor errors	– there are only a few minor errors	– there are practically no errors
– visual presentation (e.g., indentations, spacing, margins, title, highlighting, italics, font)	– the visual presentation is not clear at all	– the visual presentation is not always clear	– the visual presentation is clear	– the visual presentation is clear and enhances the content

Grade 7 Level 1: Example 1

AN ADVERTISEMENT



THE PILL THAT KEEPS YOU GOING

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! THE NEW MIRACLE PILL IS FOR SALE. FOR ONLY $29.99 YOU CAN KEEP GOING AND NEVER STOP. WITH THE SPECIAL INGREDIANT GINSENG. ITS FOR BUSY ADULTS ALWAYS ON THE RUN. THIS PILL HAS THE FRUITY TASTE OF CHERRIES, BLUEBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, PINEAPPLE AND A LITTLE TASTE OF PEACHES. AN EASY TO TAKE PILL ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PUT IT IN YOUR MOUTH AND CHEW. FOR 20 PILLS IN A BOTTLE YOU CAN KEEP GOING AND NEVER GET TIRED.

IF YOU'RE A BUSY ADULT AND NEED SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU GOING BUY THESE MIRACLE PILLS. THESE PILLS DO NOT GIVE YOU DROWSEY. FOR ONLY $29.99 YOU CAN GET A BOTTLE OF MIRALE PILLS.

THE PILL THAT KEEPS YOU GOING

ATTENTION! ATTENTION! THE NEW MIRACLE PILL IS FOR SALE. FOR ONLY $29.99 YOU CAN KEEP GOING AND NEVER STOP. WITH THE SPECIAL INGREDIANT GINSENG. ITS FOR BUSY ADULTS ALWAYS ON THE RUN. THIS PILL HAS THE FRUITY TASTE OF CHERRIES, BLUEBERRIES, STRAWBERRIES, PINEAPPLE AND A LITTLE TASTE OF PEACHES. AN EASY TO TAKE PILL ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PUT IT IN YOUR MOUTH AND CHEW. FOR 20 PILLS IN A BOTTLE YOU CAN KEEP GOING AND NEVER GET TIRED.

IF YOU'RE A BUSY ADULT AND NEED SOMETHING TO KEEP YOU GOING BUY THESE MIRACLE PILLS. THESE PILLS DO NOT GIVE YOU DROWSEY. FOR ONLY $29.99 YOU CAN GET A BOTTLE OF MIRALE PILLS.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer expresses a few simple undeveloped ideas
- the reason why the pill is a "miracle" is not explained
- there are few supporting details that are relevant to the topic

Communication
- the vocabulary used is simple (e.g., "put it in your mouth and chew")
- literary devices are not used
- there is limited variety in the sentences used

Organization
- the introduction is not supported by the closing
- ideas are not connected in paragraphs
- ideas are not related to each other

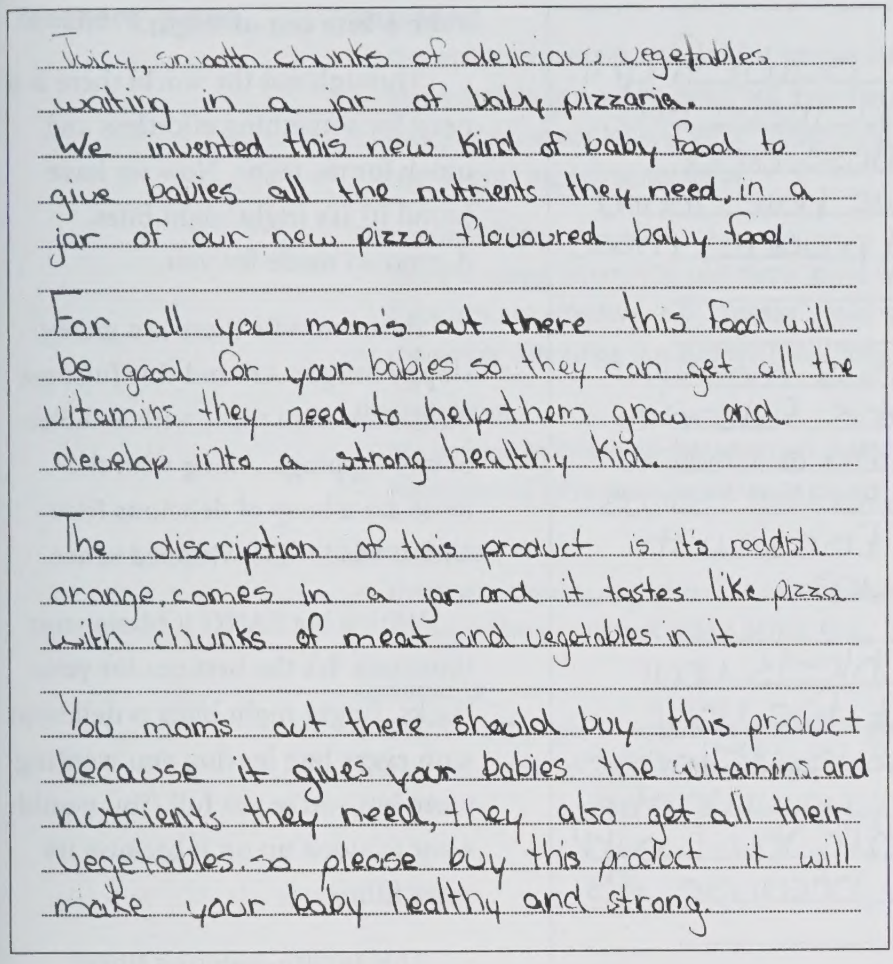
Conventions
- there are several major errors (e.g., "These pills do not give you drowsey.")
- the visual presentation is not clear (e.g., there is no reason for the division into two sections)

Comments

This piece of writing expresses a few simple undeveloped ideas. The details do not support the topic presented in the title. There is no clear overall paragraph structure.

Grade 7 Level 1: Example 2

AN ADVERTISEMENT



Juicy, smooth chunks of delicious vegetables waiting in a jar of baby pizzaria. We invented this new kind of baby food to give babies all the nutrients they need, in a jar of our new pizza flavoured baby food.

For all you mom's out there this food will be good for your babies so they can get all the vitamins they need, to help them grow and develop into a strong healthy kid.

The discription of this product is it's reddish orange, comes in a jar and it tastes like pizza with chunks of meat and vegetables in it.

You mom's out there should buy this product because it gives your babies the vitamins and nutrients they need, they also get all their vegetables so please buy this product it will make your baby healthy and strong.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer presents a few simple ideas
- nutrition seems to be the central idea, but this is not developed
- a few details connect to the topic

Communication
- there is some awareness of the audience (e.g., "you mom's out there")
- the vocabulary used is simple and there is no evidence of the use of literary devices

Organization
- the development of paragraphs is limited
- the second paragraph repeats the ideas of the first
- the writer appears to be responding to prompts
- there is an attempt to summarize the message in the conclusion

Conventions
- there are major errors (e.g., a run-on sentence in the last paragraph)
- there are spelling and grammatical errors (e.g., "discription")

Comments

The piece contains a few simple but repeated ideas supported by a few relevant details. The message is not focused. There is some awareness of the audience. There is no attempt to use descriptive words.

Grade 7 Level 2: Example 1

AN ADVERTISEMENT

Take a bite outof fright.

Through out the world there is a need ~~for~~ something effortless and quick for us, teens. Now we have found it! It's fright night bites. A product made for you.

In the middle there is a messy, sloppy burger. Around this fulsome burger are mini tacos with a choice of any toppings. Along with the tacos are a heap of delicious fries with tornado-like whipped sauce.

With a big BANG it blasts your tastebuds. It's the best cut for your bucks. Fright night bites is delicioso with every bite leaving you wanting more but you're too full. You would want to stock up on it because it's extra filling.

This mouth-watering finger food is a product no food lover should ever be without.

Take a bite out of fright.

Through out the world there is a need for something effortless and quick for us, teens. Now we have found it! It's fright night bites. A product made for you.

In the middle there is a messy, sloppy burger. Around this fulsome burger are mini tacos with a choice of any toppings. Along with the tacos are a heap of delicious fries with tornado-like whipped sauce.

With a big BANG it blasts your tastebuds. It's the best cut for your bucks. Fright night bites is delicioso with every bite leaving you wanting more but you're too full. You would want to stock up on it because it's extra filling.

This mouth-watering finger food is a product no food lover should ever be without.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer expresses a variety of simple ideas
- some details are not relevant but even the relevant details are not all effective (much of the description is not logical for a "finger food")
- the "fright" aspect is not clear

Communication
- there is some attempt to use descriptive words (e.g., "tornado-like"); however, some adjectives are not effective (e.g., "messy", "sloppy")
- the writer identifies the audience as teens and attempts to appeal to that group

Organization
- the writing includes an introduction, a body, and a conclusion
- the topics of individual paragraphs do not necessarily support the main idea

Conventions
- there are several major errors in language conventions and several sentence fragments; some sentences do not make sense (e.g., "It's the best cut for your bucks.")

Comments

The writer attempts to appeal to a specific audience, but the description is not effective. The writer does not explain how the food is "quick".

Grade 7 Level 2: Example 2

AN ADVERTISEMENT

Are you working hard? Do you want something that is hot? I don't think so. I would want something cold, soft and refreshing like ICE-A-CHANGE.

Are you wondering what Ice-a-Change is? It's ice cream with syrup on it, but whan the syrup hits the ice cream, it changes colour's. Blue, yellow, red, green, and purple are some of them.

Ice-a-Change is a good thing to have around the house, like when you have a party. The syrup is only 4g of fat, when it is on the ice-cream. You can buy the syrup in a box of 24 and it only costs $15.00, and I say that is cheep.

Ice-a-Change is cold, soft, and refreshing, so buy it today.

Are you working hard? Do you want something that is hot? I don't think so. I would want something cold, soft and refreshing like ICE-A-CHANGE.

Are you wondering what Ice-a-Change is? It's ice cream with syrup on it, but whan the syrup hits the ice cream, it changes colour's. Blue, yellow, red, green, and purple are some of them.

Ice-a-Change is a good thing to have around the house, like when you have a party. The syrup is only 4g of fat, when it is on the ice-cream. You can buy the syrup in a box of 24 and it only costs $15.00, and I say that is cheep.

Ice-a-Change is cold, soft, and refreshing, so buy it today.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer presents a few simple ideas and includes some relevant details
- some of the logic is weak (e.g., "4g of fat, when it is on the ice-cream")
- the idea of "refreshing" is not developed

Communication
- there is little awareness of who the audience is
- the vocabulary used is simple (e.g., "a good thing to have around the house")

Organization
- the introduction attempts to appeal to the reader but is confusing
- there is little connection between the introduction and the conclusion
- details are presented in paragraphs but are not connected within the paragraphs

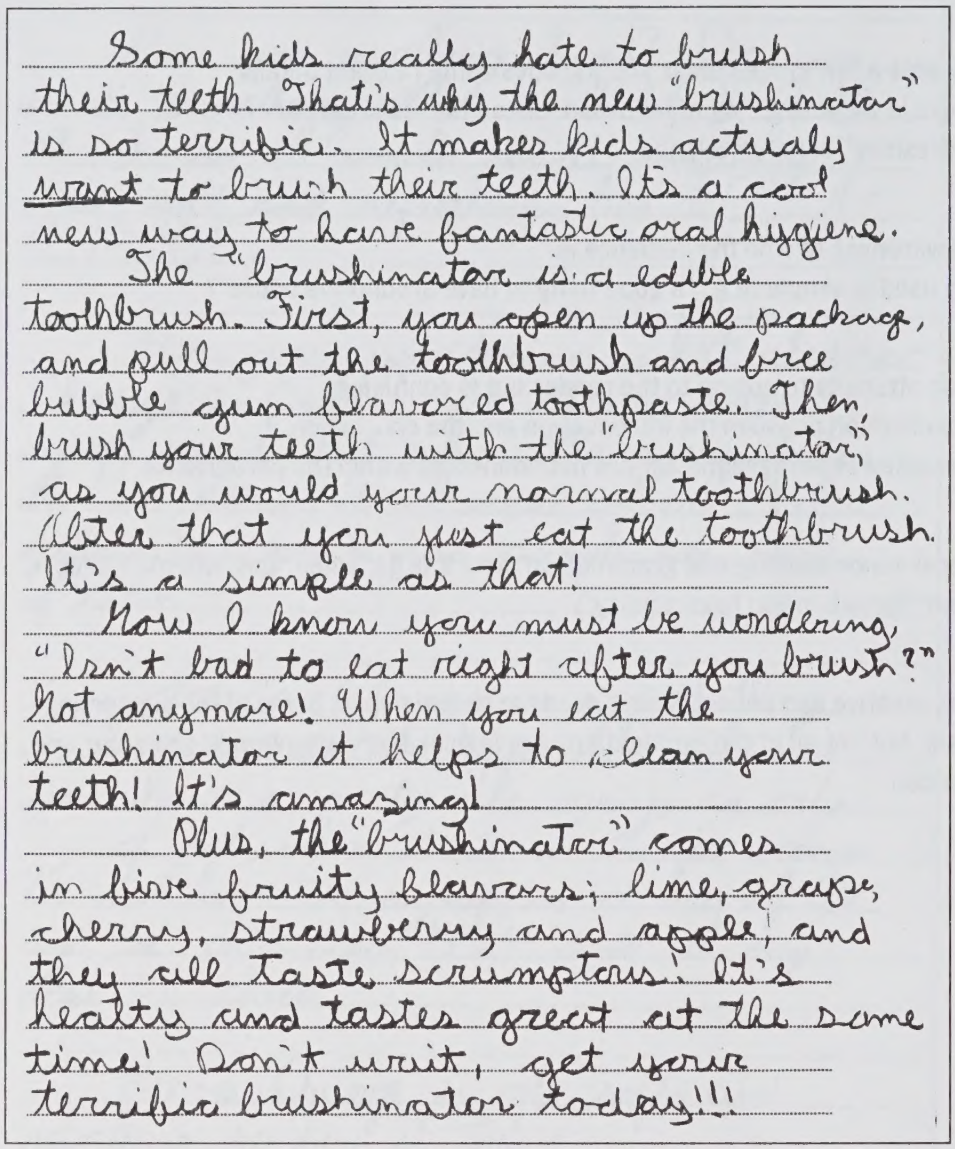
Conventions
- there are several minor spelling and grammatical errors (e.g., "whan" for "when", "cheep" for "cheap", and "like when you have a party")

Comments

The central idea is creative and believable but needs to be developed. Some of the supporting details are relevant, but not all of the explanations are logical. More attention to grammar and punctuation is needed.

Grade 7 Level 3: Example 1

AN ADVERTISEMENT



Some kids really hate to brush their teeth. That's why the new "brushinator" is so terrific. It makes kids actualy want to brush their teeth. It's a cool new way to have fantastic oral hygiene.

The "brushinator is a edible toothbrush. First, you open up the package, and pull out the toothbrush and free bubble gum flavored toothpaste. Then brush your teeth with the "brushinator," as you would your normal toothbrush. After that you just eat the toothbrush. It's a simple as that!

Now I know you must be wondering, "Isn't bad to eat right after you brush?" Not anymore! When you eat the brushinator it helps to clean your teeth! It's amazing!

Plus, the "brushinator" comes in five fruity flavors; lime, grape, cherry, strawberry and apple, and they all taste scrumptous! It's healty and tastes great at the same time! Don't wait, get your terrific brushinator today!!!

Some kids really hate to brush their teeth. That's why the new "brushinator" is so terrific. It makes kids actualy want to brush their teeth. It's a cool new way to have fantastic oral hygiene.

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Plus, the "brushinator" comes in five fruity flavors; lime, grape, cherry, strawberry and apple, and they all taste scrumptous! It's healty and tastes great at the same time! Don't wait, get your terrific brushinator today!!!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer expresses well-developed ideas supported with relevant details
- the writer anticipates questions of the reader and responds logically

Communication
- there is clear evidence of the writer's voice and appeals to the audience
- dialogue is used effectively
- much of the vocabulary is used effectively

Organization
- the introduction, body, and conclusion are organized to develop a central idea
- paragraphs connect related ideas and have clear topic sentences
- the final paragraph should be divided into two paragraphs

Conventions
- there are a few minor errors in spelling (e.g., "actualy" and "healty")
- the writer uses underlining and punctuation for effect
- missing words indicate the need for a more careful final edit

Comments

This piece develops the description in a creative and interesting way. The message is clear and an appeal is made to the reader.

Grade 7 Level 3: Example 2

AN ADVERTISEMENT

Sports Creation Of the Year!!

Do you get tired after walking? Are you exhausted just watching sports? Pop one of these wonder vitamins in your mouth and Donovan Bailey will seem like a turtle. This vivid vitamin may seem like a dream but it is far from it. It is cool, crisp, creative, colorful and will make you more athletic just reading about it! This alluring as french perfume creation is made by the intelligent, intellectual, inventive and innovative staff at B/G sports company and athletic specialists. The new as powerful as atomic energy vitamin is the one and only Athletilize.

You're probably wondering if this imaginative invention will taste like a block of sugar. The hyper vitamin is packed with nutrients and minerals that have been tested and quarantined. This vitamin has enriched, all natural, enhanced fibres that naturally boost your mental and physical athletic ability. This vital vitamin is inexpensive and safe for athletes of all ages. It is anti-allergenic and has no side effects. The power-packed vitamin is low fat and contains absolutely, positively no sugar whatsoever. It has no artificial sweeteners, flavors or colors. This creation is perfectly all natural.

Through extensive testing we have scientific proof that this 100% natural product will increase your athletic energy and pump up your athletic ability to a maximum. Athletilize is under no circumstances addictive. These pills can be harmful in one situation. You may only have one pill one hour before beginning an athletic event. You may not take them as an energy pill to avoid sleep. As is with everything, too much of this product will cause severe illness and insomnia. So keep in mind the rules while you're out there having fun!

Athletilize is a product of B/G sports company and athletic specialists.

Copyright 1998

Athletic Magazine

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer expresses well-developed ideas
- most details are relevant except "cool" and "creative"
- description is logical and includes cautions about the use of the product

Communication
- the purpose is clearly explained in the introduction
- the vocabulary used is effective (e.g., "enhanced", "alluring")
- literary devices such as alliteration and similes are used
- some exaggerated humour is used effectively (e.g., "will make you more athletic just reading about it")

Organization
- introduction, body, and conclusion are organized to develop a central idea
- paragraphs are generally well developed, but could have clearer links between topic sentences and summary sentences
- a variety of sentence structure enhances the message

Conventions
- the visual presentation is clear and creative (e.g., "Copyright 1998, Athletic Magazine")
- there are only a few minor spelling and grammatical errors

Comments

This piece contains ideas that are well developed in depth and detail. The writing is descriptive and persuasive.

Grade 7 Level 4: Example 1

AN ADVERTISEMENT

The Fabulous Fruit Chew

Introducing a new twist that will spoil your tastebuds! Finally a delicious snack that is actually good for you. You heard it right! The new Fabulous Fruit Chew is loaded with vitamins and minerals that burst with energy. Doctors reccomend this snack for busy adults and seniors who have too much to accomplish, but not enough energy. All you have to do, is include the Fabulous Fruit Chew in your diet once a day for vitamins and lasting energy to help you get through your busy days.

The Fabulous Fruit Chew is brimming with luscious, fresh fruit flavours. Savour the bounty of the exquisite taste and aromatic scent! The whole of the bar is combined of dehydrated strips of fresh fruit in various flavours. It is smooth in texture and has a unique appearance as well as a delightful taste. We guarentee, it's as tasty as biting into a freshly picked fruit. The Fabulous Fruit Chew is simply pleasing, with its heavenly aroma, it will surely lure you into the delectable, yet delicate and extremely healthy product. Our irresistible flavours will definitely tickle your tastebuds: presumptuous peach, luscious lemon, savory strawberry, magnanimous melon, pleasurable peach and many more. If you think that's positively uplifting, just wait! Along with each tantalizing flavour comes a package of heavenly "real" cool whip. Squeeze on the alluring topping and indulge yourself in this devine, toothsome treat.

Overall, I think that busy adults and seniors should purchase the Fabulous Fruit Chew because it is extremely healthy and includes important essential nutrients, vitamins, minerals and energy for the everyday lives of adults and seniors. It is packed with real fruit flavour and devine cool whip toppings. It is also completely denture safe and will not stick or pull out dental work. We guarentee our consumers on the quality of the Fabulous Fruit Chew, however if you are not satisfied we will gladly refund your money and supply you with a new box of the product, because you deserve the best!

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- detailed information is clearly relevant to the topic and convincing to the reader (the writer identifies the product as "delicious" and "good for you", and supports these ideas effectively)
- the writer expresses a well-developed, original idea

Communication

- there is strong evidence of appeal to a specific audience
- the introduction engages the reader
- almost all words are used effectively (e.g., "dehydrated", "delectable")
- there is effective use of alliteration in naming the flavours
- a variety of sentence structures enhances the description

Organization

- there is a clear introduction, body, and conclusion
- the introduction is engaging and the conclusion reinforces the message
- paragraphs are well developed with topic sentences and supporting detail

Conventions

- spelling errors are evident (e.g., "reccomend" and "guarentee"), but the words misspelled are generally difficult
- there are only a few grammatical errors (e.g., "We guarentee our consumers on the quality")

Comments

The writer has well-developed and creative ideas. Details are used effectively to maintain interest.

Grade 7 Level 4: Example 2

AN ADVERTISEMENT

It's dinner time and you want to make something easy and yet nutritious. You decide on a delectable dish made of chicken. Everyone is called up for dinner and things are going fine until Robbie says, "What is for dinner?"

"Oh no," he cries, "Not chicken again. I hate that stuff! I want hot dogs."

"But hot dogs aren't good for you," you protest while trying to calm him down. "You can have them for lunch tomorrow."

"But I want them now!" Robbie stammers as he runs crying to his room.

This entire scene could have been prevented if you had Wienerman's Hero Dogs. They're as healthy as an entire meal and as scrumptious as a normal hot dog. These tantilizing wieners are different because they are 100% real meat. Unlike ordinary frankfurters these hot dogs have no fillers, by-products, or MSG. These wieners give your children the vitamins, minerals, and nutrition that they need and give you, the parent, the reassurance that you are feeding your children properly! Wienerman Hero Dogs come in five savoury flavours; Burly Beef, Tough Turkey, Courageous Chicken, Flawless Fish, and Tiku Tofu.

So if your child is like Robbie then be sure to buy new Wienerman Hero Dogs at your local grocery store.

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So if your child is like Robbie then be sure to buy new Wienerman Hero Dogs at your local grocery store.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer presents the product in a logical way and builds a persuasive argument
- the details are relevant and enhance the argument

Communication
- the writer engages the reader with an interesting introduction
- the writer uses dialogue effectively
- the writer shows awareness of audience and anticipates and responds to potential questions and concerns
- the writer uses alliteration effectively in the names of the flavours

Organization
- paragraph structure is used, although one paragraph is long
- the writer presents a clear introduction, body, and conclusion
- a more definite summary is required in the conclusion

Conventions
- dialogue is used accurately
- there are almost no errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar

Comments

This piece uses stylistic devices to create reader appeal. The food product is creative and realistic. The details support the idea of a healthy substitute food product.

Grade 8

An Opinion Piece
(a Letter to the Editor)

An Opinion Piece (a Letter to the Editor)

The Task

Students were asked to write a letter to the editor giving an opinion about a current issue. They were reminded to support their points of view with relevant facts and to be clear and persuasive. They were to use the writing process described on pages 6 and 11 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*. Students were reminded to check their work for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

The following are the "overall expectations" that relate to this task:

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- communicate ideas and information for a variety of purposes and to specific audiences, using forms appropriate for their purpose and features appropriate to the form;
- use writing for various purposes and in a range of contexts (e.g., to clarify personal concerns and to explore social issues);
- organize information and ideas creatively as well as logically, using paragraph structures (e.g., to develop a comparison or establish a cause-and-effect relationship);
- use a wide variety of sentence types and sentence structures, with conscious attention to style;
- revise and edit their work independently or using feedback from their peers;
- proofread and correct their final drafts, focusing on grammar, spelling, punctuation, and conventions of style;
- use and spell correctly the vocabulary appropriate for this grade;
- use correctly the conventions (e.g., grammar, punctuation, spelling) specified for this grade.

During this task, students focused on the first three "overall expectations" and worked on the following selected "expectations in specific areas" from the Grade 8 curriculum:

By the end of Grade 8, students will:

- use more complex sentence structures correctly;
- select and use their words with increasing sophistication and effectiveness.

Previous Learning Experiences

It was suggested that before attempting the task, students should have had experience with the following:

- writing letters
- opportunities to state their opinions and support their opinions with reasons
- previous experiences with process writing
- using a dictionary and thesaurus when writing
- comparing their work to criteria outlined on task-specific charts like the rubrics included in this booklet

The Process Used

Teachers used the following process:

Prewriting, Part 1. Students compared sample letters from newspapers or the Internet to determine what makes an effective letter to the editor using a work sheet entitled "Reviewing Letters to the Editor" in the student package. The class identified the differences in format among letters to the editor, friendly letters, and business letters.

Students brainstormed current issues (global, school, or community), recorded them on chart paper, and identified the issues that concerned them most. They then worked in pairs to research a selected issue using the "Research Guide" in the student package (or a similar alternative).

Prewriting, Part 2. Using the following cooperative learning strategy, students learned to support their opinions with facts.

Four Corners

Four locations in the classroom were designated as "Strongly Agree", "Agree Somewhat", "Mildly Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree".

Strongly Agree	Agree Somewhat
Mildly Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The teacher then made a statement about a movie, book, or TV show (e.g., "the best film of the decade"), and students went to the location that matched their opinion. As a group, students discussed the reasons for their opinions and presented their points of view to the class. They then tried to persuade others to agree with them. Students were allowed to change their corners as their opinions changed.

Reviewing the criteria. Teachers reviewed with their students the criteria for an effective letter using a checklist included in the student package (or any similar alternative).

Drafting. Students wrote their letters to the editor using the work sheet "First Draft of My Letter to the Editor" in the student package.

Editing. Students edited their work and then worked in pairs to complete a peer edit of their work (using the guideline in the student package) before writing their final copies.

Publishing. Students revised their compositions using the suggestions from their peer editors and wrote their final copies using resources such as computers, dictionaries, and thesauruses.

Reflecting. Students reflected on the process they had used by filling out the reflection sheets provided in their student packages.

Teachers then evaluated students' work using the rubric reproduced on the next page.

Grade 8: Rubric for an Opinion Piece (a Letter to the Editor)

Categories	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Reasoning	**The student:**			
– complexity of ideas	– writes a few simple, undeveloped ideas	– writes and develops a variety of simple ideas	– writes and develops ideas of some complexity	– develops ideas fully to create greater understanding
– exploration of social issues and clarification of personal concerns	– states facts about a social issue, but shows little understanding of it	– shows some understanding of a social issue	– shows understanding and personal concern about a social issue	– shows thorough understanding and commitment about a social issue
– number and relevance of supporting details	– provides very few facts supporting his or her point of view	– provides some supporting evidence for his or her point of view	– supports his or her point of view with relevant facts	– supports his or her point of view fully with relevant facts
Communication	**The student's letter:**			
– purpose (to express an opinion in a letter to the editor)	– states facts	– attempts to persuade	– is persuasive	– is very persuasive
– voice (opinion)	– contains no clear opinion or point of view	– contains an opinion somewhat clearly expressed	– contains an opinion or point of view expressed clearly	– contains an opinion or point of view expressed clearly and convincingly
– clarity and precision of ideas	– contains few ideas and facts clearly stated	– contains some ideas and facts clearly stated, but which may be repetitive	– contains ideas and facts that are mostly clearly stated	– contains all or almost all ideas and facts clearly and concisely stated
– word use and vocabulary	– contains little or no evidence of new vocabulary	– contains some new vocabulary	– contains vocabulary that suits the purpose and audience	– contains new words or special terminology that supports the opinion presented
– sentence variety (structure, type, length)	– relies on one sentence type	– contains a variety of sentences	– contains a wide variety of sentences	– contains a wide variety of sentences used effectively
Organization	**In the student's letter:**			
– overall structure (introduction, body, conclusion)	– there is no clear overall structure or organization	– there is some evidence of a structure or organization	– the organization is logical and appropriate	– the organization supports the purpose and enhances the argument
	– very little attempt has been made to define the issue in the introduction	– the issue is mentioned in the introduction, but is not clearly defined	– the issue is defined in the introduction, and the introduction and conclusion are connected	– the introduction clearly defines the issue, captures the reader's attention, and is connected to the conclusion
	– there is no summary or clear call to action	– some attempt has been made to summarize the issue	– the final paragraph summarizes the issue and suggests further action	– the issue is summarized and the action required is clear and compelling
Conventions	**In the student's letter:**			
– grammar, spelling, punctuation	– there are several major errors or omissions	– there are several minor errors or omissions	– there are only a few minor errors or omissions	– there are practically no errors or omissions
– visual presentation (e.g., indentations, spacing, margins, letter format, italics, font)	– few aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– some aspects of the expected visual presentation are evident	– the visual presentation is appropriate	– the visual presentation is effective

Grade 8 Level 1: Example 1

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Would you?

Dear Editor,

What do you think about school uniforms in your school? Would you wear them? Or would you switch schools?

I think that if students wear these uniforms it will give the school more respect. Also I think that if our students in our society won't care about there indivduality.

If students wear these uniforms it will give respect to them. I also think that the students self-estem will be better because they won't have to worry being in fashion.

If students in our society wear these uniforms there will be a decrease of the sales in clothes. This will make students not make fun of other students.

If all students wear the same clothes won't make fun of other students because they will be wearing the same cothes. This will make the students feel better.

I think that if we put a stop to the uniforms then the teasing will still go onto the students. We need to take action know and prevent the teasing.

We have to be responsisble for our actions.If we don't stop the name calling, not wearing the same clothes, and inbcreasing the sale prices of clothes this will all happen.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer does not take a definite position on the issue
- the writer's argument is not persuasive
- details and facts tend to support both sides of the issue

Communication

- the writer's opinion is not clear
- there is no evidence of the use of new vocabulary, and most of the words used are simple
- there is overuse of the sentence form beginning "If students"

Organization

- there is evidence of some beginning paragraph structure as sentences are connected in pairs
- individual paragraphs have no clear focus
- an attempt is made in the introduction to define the issues
- there is no summary or call to action

Conventions

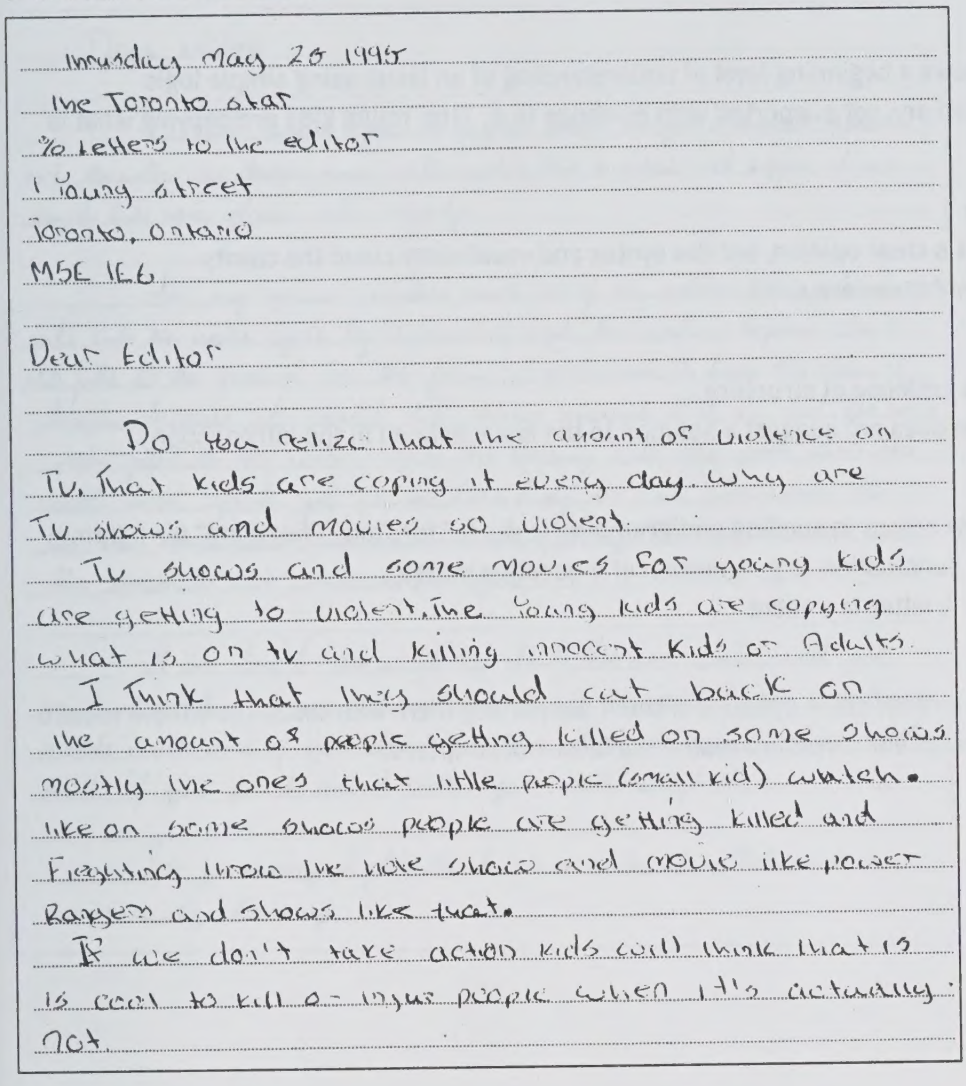
- some incomplete thoughts are presented as sentences
- there are several major errors in spelling and grammar (e.g., "the teasing will still go onto the students", "there" for "their", and "know" for "now")

Comments

There is no clear opinion stated and no development of an argument. The details are not clear, and the ideas are not organized. There are several major errors in language conventions.

Grade 8 Level 1: Example 2

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Thrusday May 28 1998
lhe Toronto Star
% Letters to the editor
1 Young Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5E 1E6

Dear Editor

Do you relize lhat the amount of violence on TV. That kids are coping it every day. Why are TV shows and movies so violent.

TV shows and some movies for young kids are getting to violent. The Young kids are copying what is on tv and killing innocent kids or Adults.

I Think that lhey should cut back on lhe amount of people getting killed on some shows mostly lhe ones that little people (small kid) watch. like on some shows people are getting killed and Fieghting lhrow the hole show and movie like power Rangers and shows like that.

If we don't take action kids will lhink lhat is is cool to kill or injur people when it's actually not.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer shows a beginning level of understanding of an issue using simple logic
- facts presented are not supported with evidence (e.g., "The Young kids are copying what is on tv ...")

Communication
- the writer has a clear opinion, but the syntax and vocabulary cloud the clarity
- only simple sentences are used

Organization
- there is some evidence of structure
- the conclusion does not suggest a solution to the issue defined in the introduction

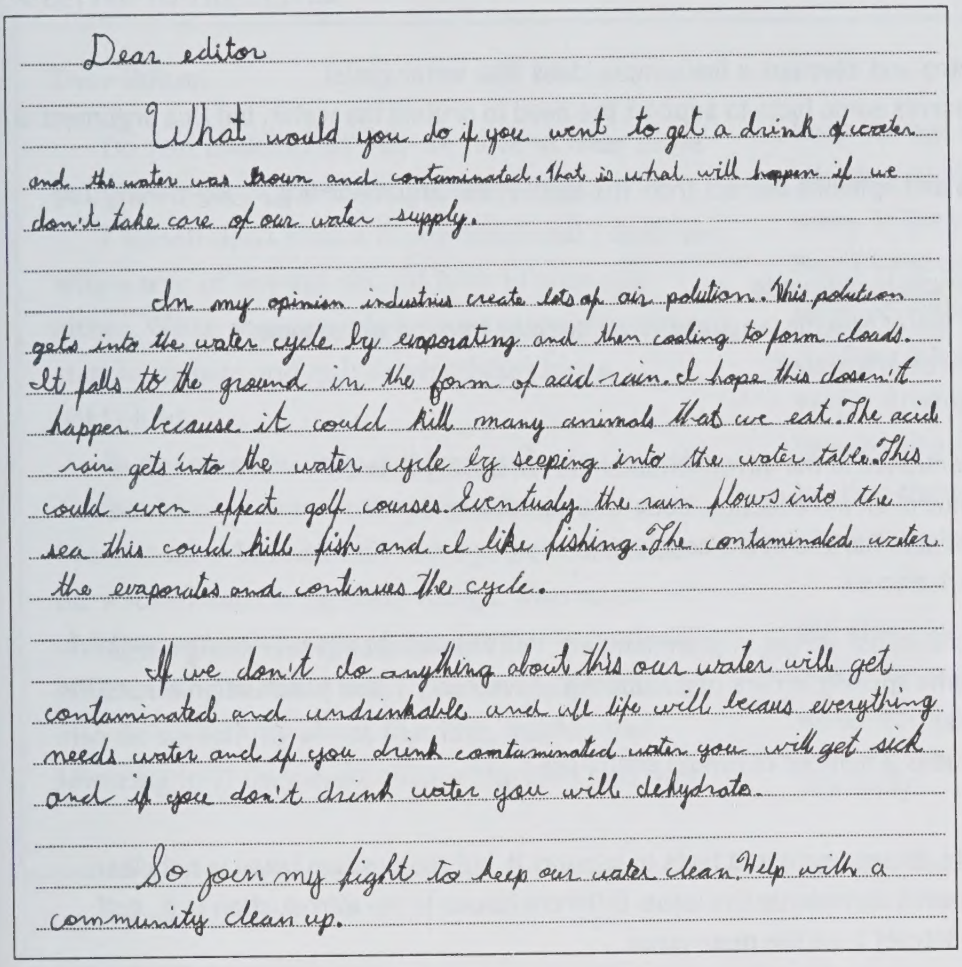
Conventions
- there are many errors in spelling and grammar (e.g., "to" for "too", "fieghting" for fighting) and errors in punctuation (e.g., omission of a question mark)
- the format for a letter is evident

Comments

This student has written some opinions without supporting them with facts. The simple vocabulary and weak syntax and structure match the level 1 descriptors.

Grade 8 Level 2: Example 1

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR



Dear editor

What would you do if you went to get a drink of water and the water was brown and contaminated. That is what will happen if we don't take care of our water supply.

In my opinion industries create lots of air polution. This polution gets into the water cycle by evaporating and then cooling to form clouds. It falls to the ground in the form of acid rain. I hope this dosen't happen because it could kill many animals that we eat. The acid rain gets into the water cycle by seeping into the water table. This could even effect golf courses. Eventualy the rain flows into the sea this could kill fish and I like fishing. The contaminated water the evaporates and continues the cycle.

If we don't do anything about this our water will get contaminated and undrinkable and all life will becaus everything needs water and if you drink contaminated water you will get sick and if you don't drink water you will dehydrate.

So join my fight to keep our water clean. Help with a community clean up.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer writes and develops a few simple ideas (the water cycle)
- the writer presents some facts to support the need to protect the water, but this argument is not focused
- different facts and opinions detract from the logic of the argument (e.g., "I like fishing")

Communication

- the letter attempts to persuade
- there is some use of specific language (e.g., "seeping into the water table")
- some ideas are clearly stated

Organization

- the issue is mentioned in the introduction but is not clearly defined
- there is evidence of an introduction, body, and conclusion
- the issue is not summarized in the conclusion

Conventions

- there are several minor errors in grammar (e.g., "all life will becaus everything needs water") and some spelling errors (e.g., "dosen't", "eventualy"), and punctuation errors (no question marks)
- the writer includes a number of run-on sentences

Comments

The letter presents an argument and facts to support it, but the position taken is not clear. The conclusion doesn't summarize the issue. Different issues in the introduction (e.g., golf courses, fishing) detract from the main issue.

Grade 8 Level 2: Example 2

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Do you understand why we have to wear those pain in the neck bike helmets? Me either.

I myself don't wear a bike helmet and I don't see why a teen of any age should have to wear one either. When most people become teenagers they start to mature and quit driving bikes like a wild child.

In my opinion, only children under the age of 12 should have to wear them. I feel this way because most kids around this age are still a little bit wacked and doing crazy things. Also most children around the age of 6 and under are probably still learning to ride a bike. The law people should also do something about that fine, maybe, like lowering it. If they don't change the laws and they keep the age at 16, the police should have a choice whether to stop the kid or just give him a friendly wave. If the person is driving safely don't stop him, but if he is driving like a crazy wild child, I give them all rights to stop them or give him a warning.

Sure a helmet will protect your head, but if you're driving slowly and safely I don't see why we have to wear them. One consequence though would be, that there are still some crazy drivers and with one wrong turn of the wheel, well you never know.

In conclusion, I would like to say that, if you feel that you can drive a bike without having too bad of an accident, that you should have a choice whether or not to wear one.

Sincerely,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the letter represents the opinion that teens should not have to wear bike helmets
- the writer does not provide specific facts, but relies only on opinion to support the position
- some ideas cloud the issue (e.g., "crazy drivers")

Communication
- some ideas are clearly stated but are repetitive
- the writer uses very simple vocabulary (e.g., "law people")
- there is an attempt to persuade, but the argument is not convincing

Organization
- the issue is mentioned in the introduction but is not clearly defined
- there is some evidence of structure, but the issue is not summarized
- the conclusion is weak and conditional on circumstances

Conventions
- there are several major errors in conventions (e.g., "without having too bad of an accident")
- the use of colloquialisms is distracting (e.g., "like lowering it", "wacked")
- there are several punctuation errors (e.g., "one wrong turn of the wheel, well you never know")

Comments

There is an attempt to persuade but the argument is not convincing. There are no relevant facts or details to persuade the reader. The author seems to be discussing many sides of the issue. The major errors in the use of language conventions detract from the message.

Grade 8 Level 3: Example 1

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Picture walking down any major street in a big city, in any country. Have you ever not been approached by a homeless person begging for money in these situations? I didn't think so. And what do we do? Ignore them. Most people are afraid they will be mugged or harmed if they stop to offer a handout to these people. "Go get yourself a nice hot meal." one might say, but what about tomorrow? We can't let these people depend on handouts from passersby on street.

Stats Canada states that 31% of all homeless or poor people are single mothers with infants or young children. What are they to do? Give up their children so they can afford a house and food? Why should they be punished like that? Donations and shelters have been established but, they don't seem to be doing anything.

Crime rates may be increasing due to people stealing or killing to get what they want. Suicide rates may increase due to such people taking their own lives because they've given up hope and don't want to live like this anymore. It is really very sad. Welfare may be an option for people who just don't have enough, but what about people who don't have anything? We need to think about this, we need to take action.

What I think today's society can do is find some way to start an organization with corporate support that can provide such people with money, basic necessities, and housing. Maybe then, we can give these people jobs and they can start a real life. If we try hard enough, and if we care about not only being safe from such people who are dangerous but, for the welfare of these unfortunate people then surely we can accomplish something that will give these people hope and a chance to have a decent life.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer expresses a personal concern and an understanding of the issue
- the writer uses some relevant facts to support the argument

Communication
- the vocabulary used is persuasive (e.g., "punished", "basic necessities")
- the writer uses dialogue and a variety of sentence types
- some language is not clear (e.g., "Have you ever not been approached ...?")

Organization
- the issue is defined in the introduction and the introduction is connected to the conclusion
- the arguments are presented logically; however, some points are not supported (e.g., "Donations and shelters have been established but, they don't seem to be doing anything.")
- the conclusion summarizes the issue and suggests further action

Conventions
- there are a few minor errors in punctuation (e.g., "We need to think about this, we need to take action.")

Comments

The writing communicates some personal concern and some understanding of the issues involved.

Grade 8 Level 3: Example 2

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Would you like to be the next victim of teen violence? As the law stands right now, once you are eighteen, you are considered an adult and you receive adult sentences. The government wants to change the law so fourteen year olds and up can receive adult sentences. I agree. I will explain the following supports through out my letter; Teens know they won't get in a lot of trouble, they think it's okay to be violent and all teens know that violence is wrong.

Teens know they will not get in a lot of trouble if they commit a crime such as murder because the maximum sentence they could receive right now is five years in juvinile detention. This does not seem like a long time when you think about it. If an adult were to do the same crime, they could end up receiving life in prison.

Young offender's think it's okay to be violent because they see their idols doing it on television and movies. If the Young Offender's Act changes the age to fourteen, maybe teens will realize that it's more serious then some people think and that their idols are doing the wrong thing, even though they are just acting.

Adolescents know that committing a crime is wrong. They know this through education (health and guidance classes), their parents and the community. If they are mature enough to get a driver's license and a job, then they should be mature enough to know what is right and wrong.

If society doesn't do something about changing the age from eighteen to fourteen for young offender's to be able to receive adult sentences, the world will have a higher death rate. Teens will think 'Oh! I just murdered someone and all I got was five years in Juvinile detention.' They will probably commit another crime when they get out!

I think it's time that the government has realized, if the young offender's are mature enough to get their driver's license, then they are mature enough to go to adult prison, and learn what it's really like to serve a sentence.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer shows some understanding of and personal concern about the issue
- the writer supports her opinion with relevant facts
- the writer develops ideas of some complexity and expresses them clearly and persuasively

Communication

- most ideas are clearly stated with a few minor errors
- the vocabulary used suits the audience (e.g., "adolescents", "mature")

Organization

- the issue is defined in the introduction and the introduction is connected to the conclusion
- the conclusion summarizes the issue and suggests further action
- the argument is logically presented with a different point developed in each paragraph
- a few minor clarifications in logic are required (e.g., "they think it's okay to be violent and all teens know that violence is wrong")

Conventions

- there are only a few minor errors in grammar (e.g., "I think it's time that the government has realized", "I will explain the following supports"), in spelling (e.g., "Juvinile", "offender's"), and in punctuation

Comments

This letter states a clear opinion and suggests further action on the part of the reader. Most of the ideas and facts are clearly stated and supported with relevant details. Further editing to correct mistakes in language conventions is needed.

Grade 8 Level 4: Example 1

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

"Nuclear Weapons and Testing will Plunge Us Into a Global Fallout"

Dear Editor,

We now have a new member of the nuclear club, India. This should come as no surprise.

In 1995 India was denied the right to test nuclear weapons, and enter the nuclear race. Today, three years later, India has started to test anyway, which seems to me to be much more frightening.

If India has the technology, why need to prove it to the western world? They are basically telling the western countries that third-world countries are now capable of testing and building weapons of mass destruction. This seems to me to look like an unnecessary flex of political muscle and strikes me as a very dangerous and childish act.

Where will it end? Other political unstable countries will follow India's example, and soon every middle-eastern country will be building and testing nuclear weapons.

If we do not stop India and similar countries, it may be too late, and we will all suffer the consequences. We have seen the horror of this weapon in the past; now we are seeing it again. The only answer is the abolition of all our weapons of mass destruction.

What is the point of possessing these weapons? In my opinion a world where everyone has weapons of mass destruction will not survive for long.

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning

- the writer develops his ideas to create greater understanding
- the writer shows understanding of and commitment to the social issue (e.g., "strikes me as a very dangerous and childish act")

Communication

- the writer's point of view is explained in a persuasive way; however, the writer could have included more supporting details and facts
- facts are presented clearly and concisely

Organization

- the introduction defines the issue and is connected to the conclusion
- the issue is summarized, and the further action required is clear

Conventions

- there are practically no errors other than "political unstable"
- there is correct use of the semicolon

Comments

The student has written a persuasive letter presenting a complex social issue in a clear, concise format. More specific facts to support the opinion would make it even more convincing. For example, why should this "come as no surprise" and what evidence is there to show that other countries will "follow India's example"?

Grade 8 Level 4: Example 2

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I believe that the prices for recreational activities are outrageous! People are saying that Canada's children are becoming "couch potato kids," but really all that's happening is that the kids' parents are taking one look at the sport prices and turning the other way!

In our small town, prices are sky-high! For figure skating you have to pay a user fee (for the use of the ice), group lesson fees, and, if you are a high-level skater, you need a pair of $500 skates. If you really want to improve, you need to pay again for "Club Ice," and private lessons for 15 minutes, it costs about $8.00, per lesson. Then there are those darn expensive competitions!

I've been told that we're lucky to live in a small town, because in cities, prices are even higher! I say, that if the prices rise much more they'll be standing on the moon, waving at us!

As for hockey, well, the hockey players pay more for their equipment than the rest altogether. In our small town they pay about $600 for (good) equipment, and about $160 more to sign up. On the other hand, in Thunder Bay, it costs almost $500 just to try out! What is this? The price is wrong?

We have one small pool here, and it's not even indoors. So why do we have to pay $2.50 per swim, when two years ago it was about $2.00? That really adds up over the summer.

At the closest indoor pool, it costs around $5.00 for kids, and $7.00 for adults. How many people love traveling so much that they'll drive for an hour every weekend (or less), to spend two hours in an indoor pool? More than you'd expect, that's for sure!

If we don't do something about the prices of recreational sports, the children of Canada will become couch potatoes. What can we do? We can fund raise. We can help the children who already do (not that it's only kids, it's adults as well). If you don't help, well, then don't complain when your kid is a couch potato.

Sincerely,

Teachers' Notes

Reasoning
- the writer shows a thorough understanding of and commitment to the issue
- the writer supports her point of view fully with relevant facts (e.g., costs of figure skating, hockey, and swimming)

Communication
- the letter is very persuasive with well-supported and convincing arguments
- the sentence variety strengthens the writer's voice; short questions add impact

Organization
- there is a clear introduction, body, and conclusion
- the introduction clearly defines the issue, captures the reader's attention, and is connected to the conclusion
- the body consists of a logical presentation of facts and examples to support the opinion
- the conclusion summarizes the issue and calls for action

Conventions
- the visual presentation is effective
- there are only a few minor errors (e.g., "hockey players pay more for their equipment than the rest altogether" [the rest of what?] and "... and private lessons for 15 minutes, it costs about ...")

Comments

The writer's point of view is clearly stated and well supported by facts. The ideas are logically presented in a convincing way. There are practically no errors in the use of language conventions.

Glossary

achievement. The demonstration of a student's learning at a given time. The comments on the writing tasks included in this booklet reflect student achievement at the end of the grade.

assessment. Assessment is the process of gathering information from a variety of sources and providing students with descriptive feedback. Assessment that involves the gathering of data related to students' experiences as they *work towards* the curriculum expectations may be called *process assessment*. Assessment that involves the gathering of information related to the specific end result, or product, of a learning process is called *product assessment*. Peer assessment, which involves the giving and receiving of feedback among students, is an important part of the writing process.

communication. In the exemplars project, "communication" was assessed based on the following components: the writer's awareness of purpose, evidence of the writer's voice, the selection of vocabulary, the sentence structure and variety, the clarity and precision of ideas, and the use of literary devices.

criteria. The identified elements of a student product that show the different levels of task performance. For example, "the degree of complexity of ideas" is one of the criteria that was used to assess student writing. The exemplars project used criterion-referenced assessment.

exemplar. Work or performance by a student that demonstrates a particular level of achievement. The levels of achievement stated on page 9 of *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8, Language, 1997* give teachers brief descriptions of four levels of student achievement on which they can base their assessments of students' work.

expectations. The statements of the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn and demonstrate in their class work and in the activities used to assess their achievement. The expectations for the writing tasks in the exemplars project come from *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 1–8: Language, 1997*.

reasoning. In the exemplars project, "reasoning" was assessed as "the ability of the writer to develop ideas and content". This included the following components: the complexity of ideas, the connection of the ideas to the topic or story line, the number and relevance of supporting facts and details, and the writer's understanding of the topic, main idea, or issue.

rubric. A scoring scale, which is a set of achievement criteria and descriptions of levels of quality used to evaluate students' work or to guide students to desired performance levels.

self-assessment. Students' own assessment of their personal progress in knowledge, skills, or processes. As a student works through the writing process, he or she needs to revise and edit his or her own writing and monitor the steps of the writing process.

standard. A description of student performance that outlines a high level of achievement of the curriculum expectations. In Ontario, level 3 is the provincial standard.

voice. In the exemplars project, "voice" was assessed as "the extent to which the writer was able to reveal a distinctive identity, personality, or individual style in the writing". This included the following components: opinions, feelings, attitudes, content, style, vocabulary, the use of the writer's own words, and awareness of audience.

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